

The Kite

Tygerberg Bird Club
Tygerberg Voëlklub



Photo credit: Daryl de Beer

Number 143 (November 2024 – April 2025)

In this issue:

Botha's Lark – extinct as early as 2025?	Pg 2
Record numbers of Cape Gannet	Pg 5
Following the Tweets	Pg 7
Photo News	Pg 8
World Oldest bird gives birth	Pg 9
Broad-billed Sanpiper	Pg 10
Club news and activities	Pg 11
Know your Birds	Pg 20
Brainteaser	Pg 24
Upcoming Club Activities	Pg 26

Affiliated member of:



Chirp from the floor

And finally, here it is – the long overdue edition of our club newsletter! Rather than offering excuses for the delay, I'll just say that "life got in the way".

The Tygerberg Bird Club membership is growing, and we welcomed 13 new members thus far in 2025. Our club members are active, with many helping behind the scenes and contributing to important conservation projects such as Bot River CWAC waterbird counts, the CAR roadside Blue Crane counts in Swartland as well as the ongoing ringing of birds at various locations. We also have several members active with atlassing for the SABAP2. Thank you to all who give of their time and knowledge.

Lately, the theme "mouse" seems to be more prevalent in our space than birding! We are acutely aware of the "Mouse-free Marion" project, and in the Vanderwalt household, we adopted my son's cat called "Muis". It doesn't stop there though. Whilst moving house last year, Brian and I managed to lose his computer mouse. It wasn't just a cheapy – it was part of an expensive wireless keyboard/mouse combination. And it was brand new! Searching as we might, we just couldn't find it. In one last desperate attempt, I re-packed the entire contents of the house. With Brian being away on a tour, I also used this opportunity to "spy" in the spaces he packed. (You never can trust a hoarder. Even if they claimed to have purged their lifetime stash of "goeters".)

After 23:00 on the second day of packing in and out, I officially gave up. The mouse was nowhere to be found. By this time, I'm working in the garage. I'm tired, I'm grumpy, and have come to realize two things: the keyboard is now worthless without the mouse and my idea of purging is miles removed from that of Mr B! Irritated, I try to re-arrange the containers he uses to breed mealworms. In the half-light I can't see inside the box and don't understand why things wouldn't move. I shone a torch inside ... on the damn mouse that's lying at the bottom of the box! Luckily, at that stage we didn't have any neighbours yet – so my shouting went unheard. The WA conversation that followed went like this: Me: "your mouse was found living with your worms". Mr B: "maybe we'll have babies". Me: "worm-mice or mice-worms?" And the moral of the story is ... **Mind your mouse!**

Happy birding!

Dalene Vanderwalt

Botha's Lark – SA's most threatened terrestrial bird species likely to become extinct as early as 2025

Without conservation action, the Botha's Lark, South Africa's most threatened terrestrial bird species, faces extinction as early as 2025. With an estimated 340 individuals left in the wild in South Africa, the species population has declined by 90% over the past decade.

The Botha's Lark, a small brown bird with an orange-pink conical bill, endemic to South Africa and found in grasslands along the escarpment of southwestern Mpumalanga, is under serious threat of extinction.

The species is not sufficiently protected in nature reserves and grasslands are not adequately preserved as a vegetation type.



Dr Hanneline Smit-Robinson, head of conservation at BirdLife South Africa, told Daily Maverick, “If we look at the decline, unless there's a serious intervention, the species could be extinct as early as 2025.”

The species, *Spizocorys fringillaris*, has a tiny and limited distribution in the grasslands of South Africa, of which 34% have been irreversibly transformed with less than 2% being formally protected, according to an article in the South African Journal of Science.

This somewhat nondescript bird used to be most present around the Wakkerstroom Highveld, with a small population historically located in the Daggakraal community region in southern Mpumalanga. However, bird guides from this area have noted its complete disappearance for two years now.

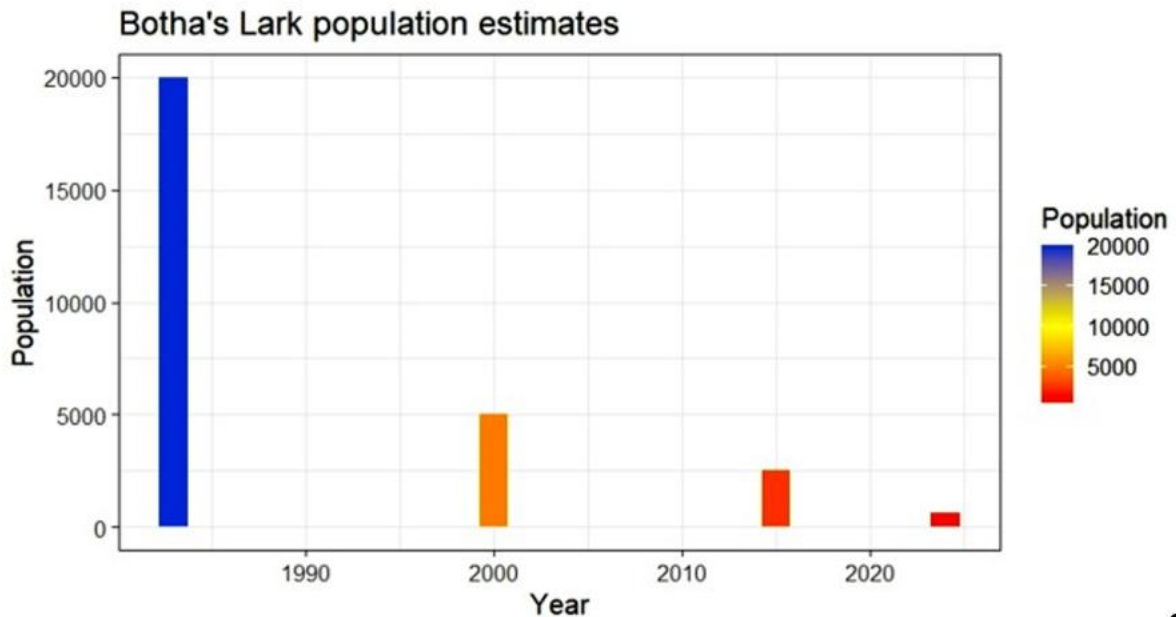
Dr David Ehlers Smith, science and spatial planning project manager at BirdLife South Africa, said this may not be the most charismatic of bird species or the easiest to identify, but the conservation of the Botha's Lark is the most pressing issue facing South Africa's terrestrial fauna.

The impending extinction of the Botha's Lark was discovered only towards the end of 2023 and early 2024 when surveys and scientific analyses were done by Robin Colyn, former BirdLife South Africa staff member and a PhD student at the University of Cape Town.

Smit-Robinson said his work indicated the situation was worse than they could have imagined. The population was estimated at 20,000 individuals in 1983; in 2015 it had declined to under 2,500.

Now, in 2024, it has declined to 340 individuals, and advanced remote sensing analyses indicate a 29% reduction of suitable habitat within its already tiny, historic distribution.

The decline will trigger the uplisting of the Botha's Lark to Critically Endangered based on the International Union for Conservation of Nature's (IUCN) Red List assessment – one step away from extinction.



Botha's Lark showed a decline of 90% over the past decade. (*Graph: BirdLife South Africa*)

Lack of political will

The Botha's Lark faces a myriad of threats, but according to experts, one of the greatest is the lack of political or economic will to safeguard species, resulting in a dearth of funds to address and mitigate the threats.

The major threat facing the species is the fragmentation and loss of habitat. Smit-Robinson said the habitat area for the species was decreasing through an increase in monoculture and agricultural expansion for soy and maize in the area. Additionally, a shift in grazing from sheep to cattle appears to be changing the grass conditions upon which the Botha's Lark relies.

Smit-Robinson said they needed to work with landowners to protect the environment in areas where the species occurs, through habitat management plans. There's a large area of habitat already protected – the Sneeuwberg Protected Environment which overlaps with the distribution of the species and lies within a strategic water source area, feeding rivers that provide water for our cities.

Plan of action

In an interview with Daily Maverick, BirdLife South Africa set out their plan to arrest the alarming decline in the Botha's Lark population.

In response to these threats, the Botha's Lark specialist working group was started two years ago by BirdLife South Africa, the Endangered Wildlife Trust, the Universities of KwaZulu-Natal, Limpopo, Cape Town and the Free State, as well as BirdLife International.

The group came together to find innovative and sustainable solutions for conserving the Botha's Lark and its habitat, while engaging with affected landowners and communities throughout its range.

“We began the working group thinking that these threatened grassland species such as the Botha's Lark, Rudd's Lark and the Yellow-breasted Pipit really needed our attention. When we got the news of 340 individuals remaining, we realised that we had to jump into action immediately. “There was no time to waste.

It's a bit of a difficult situation because we know, to some extent, what we need to do... we have to conserve the habitat for the species, but then there's also a number of questions we still need to answer," she said.

The first thing to do is conserve the habitat, which includes formal protective environments, engage with landowners, and do stakeholder engagement for having the right habitat management practices and grazing regimes.

Second is to do more research, monitoring and surveys to understand the threats; why there has been a change from sheep grazing to cattle grazing and to what extent that influences the species, and to what extent climate change is a threat to the species.

BirdLife South Africa has proposed a dedicated Birding Eco Tours Fellow of Grassland Conservation project manager to engage with landowners throughout the historic distribution of the Botha's Lark to identify survey regions; understand, support and champion sustainable land-use practices that allow for both economic and ecological viability and promote awareness among affected parties.

Smit-Robinson said this project manager would hopefully be on the ground in September this year, engaging with landowners to maintain habitat management (grazing) regimes that benefit the Botha's Lark's ecology, and liaise with the Mpumalanga Tourism and Parks Agency and the Endangered Wildlife Trust to declare the Highveld a protected environment.

They will implement surveys across seasons and within localities and conduct camera-trap and AudioMoth surveys at artificial water bodies to confirm population estimates and document the species. Smit-Robinson said camera-trap surveys at identified nesting sites will also quantify nest predation and sensitivity to disturbance. Finally, the coordination of conservation efforts and the drafting of a species action plan to measure and monitor their success.

BirdLife South Africa is in the process of updating and revising the Red List for birds of South Africa, Eswatini and Lesotho. This is undertaken every 10 years using the IUCN Red List criteria, but on a regional level. "We have a pretty good idea of what the decline is for all species that we're working on, and the Botha's Lark is by far leading the pack in population decline," Smit-Robinson said.

There's been no concerted effort for the conservation of the species until now, she said, except for the few protected environments declared, with habitat management plans that theoretically should benefit its conservation.

Smit-Robinson said they began an awareness project with the community and schools in Daggakraal in 2023, one of the direct sites where the species occurred two years ago – this used to be the most popular site to view the species. "There's not been a single species that's gone extinct on the African mainland – we've had some island species, like the Dodo, that's gone extinct in terms of a bird species. So, this is really a cause for concern, and we take this very seriously.

"We will do our absolute best to turn the situation around. We hope that once we have more people on the ground doing analysis of what we're facing, the situation will be less dire than we think.

"But for now, we have to realise that we cannot introduce any additional threats to the species — like avitourism, because when a species is so close to extinction, there's suddenly more demand to view it. "We are working on a code of conduct where we're going to be asking birders to respect the species and to avoid its known sites," Smit-Robinson said.

To learn more about the project, visit: [Botha's Lark Species Action Plan - BirdLife South Africa](#)

Kristin Engel: Daily Maverick July 2024

Record numbers at Lambert's Bay as Cape Gannet colony thrives

Bird Island, nestled off the coast of Lambert's Bay, has become Southern Africa's beacon of success in seabird conservation and the Cape Gannet population is flourishing, "**Cape Town, etc**" reports.

Home to the largest Cape Gannet colony in the region, the island has witnessed a remarkable surge in the Gannet population, reaching a record 45,000 individuals in January 2025 - the highest in 19 years. This milestone reflects both the island's thriving ecosystem and the dedicated conservation efforts that have made Bird Island a model for sustainable wildlife management.

A thriving colony: 45,000 Gannets and counting

Bird Island's Gannet population has been steadily increasing for the past five years, with numbers consistently hovering in the 30,000s. The impressive rise in numbers this year signals not only the success of local breeding but also the attraction of Gannets from other colonies, suggesting that the island is being recognised as a prime breeding ground. Gannets, known for their protracted breeding season, start laying eggs as early as October, with chicks hatching through to May of the following year.

Thanks to the island's unique characteristics - ample space, minimal predation, abundant food sources, and consistent conservation efforts - Bird Island provides the perfect sanctuary for these seabirds.

Conservation through daily monitoring and management

The success of the Cape Gannet colony can be attributed to the unwavering commitment of the dedicated team at Bird Island Nature Reserve. Unlike other colonies, Bird Island's Gannets are closely monitored every day by a conservator and three expert monitors. This team conducts thorough patrols around the island to safeguard against any potential threats from natural predators like Kelp Gulls and mongooses to illegal human activity.

One of the most critical times in the Gannet life cycle is during chick fledging season, when young Gannets take their first flight into the open ocean. Each chick is meticulously counted, and data gathered during this period, which has been ongoing for the past 18 years, provides valuable insight into the colony's growth and health. The team also tracks weather conditions, such as heavy rain, strong swells, and heatwaves, to mitigate potential disruptions to the ecosystem.

Mitigating threats: Protecting the Gannets from predators

The careful management of the island's seal population is another crucial aspect of the colony's success. Without proper control, seals could pose a serious threat to the young Gannets, especially during fledging season. To prevent this, an invisible barrier line has been established, restricting seals to a specific area on the island's western side. Should they breach this boundary, they are quickly herded back to their designated zone, ensuring the Gannets are not disturbed.

In December 2005, seal predation led to the temporary abandonment of the island by the entire Gannet colony. However, thanks to CapeNature's proactive intervention, which included the implementation of predator control measures and the use of bird decoys, the colony was successfully restored. This event highlighted the importance of continued conservation efforts and the resilience of the Gannet population.

A proven model for conservation success

Bird Island's success is a valuable example of the effectiveness of hands-on conservation. "We learn again that positive conservation outcomes often require persistent effort across several years," said Dr Ashley Naidoo, CEO of CapeNature. "Through constant monitoring, proactive management of threats like seals and gulls, and

persistent effort across several years,” said Dr Ashley Naidoo, CEO of CapeNature. and a commitment to conserving the island’s unique ecosystem, Bird Island can claim to be the best-managed Gannet colony in Southern Africa.’

Bird Island’s remarkable success offers a blueprint for other wildlife conservation initiatives and highlights what can be achieved through sustained dedication and innovative management strategies. As the Cape Gannet colony flourishes, Bird Island stands as a testament to the power of conservation and the vital role it plays in preserving the health of Southern Africa’s coastal ecosystems.

Published by Murray Swart on January 25, 2025, in “Cape Town etc”



Cape Gannet.

*Photo credit: Dave
Gordon*



Following the Tweets

When Chemfos closed its phosphate mine at Langebaanweg 30 years ago, it left more than just a pit. Following a well-planned first ecological restoration effort, it transferred its 750-hectare property to the West Coast Fossil Park (WCFP). Besides the fossils that make this park a unique tourist attraction, it encompasses a diverse naturalised environment. Birds serve as important indicators of the park's ongoing recovery status.

Week in and week out for the last five years, bar the COVID-19 lockdown period, two amateur ornithologists, Nigel McDonald and Ronald Roefs, have been conducting bird surveys at WCFP. Following the adage "the early bird catches the worm", Nigel and Ronald arrive at the crack of dawn to catch sightings of birds doing just that. They follow a network of routes crisscrossing the park and record every bird they see, including location, date, and time, basing their identifications on excellent identification guides and their good experience. The birds they see include regulars, irregulars, seasonal migrants, rarities, and everything from long ones, short ones, fat ones to skinny ones, not to mention the ones that fly and the few that don't.

In 2093 sightings up to the end of 2023, they recorded 7542 birds of 136 species. Of these, 49 species were regulars, which Nigel and Ronald could greet like good friends on most visits. Ten species were encountered only once during all those visits, making every census exciting for possible reencounters or other rare local sightings. For those who are curious, these were the African Pipit, Black-necked Grebe, Common Greenshank, Greater Striped Swallow, Little Egret, Olive Thrush, Southern Grey-headed Sparrow, Spur-winged Goose, Wattled Starling and White-



The two Master Birdwatchers, Nigel McDonald and Ronald Roefs, here in action on the Berg River.

rumped Swift. In the numbers game, Pied Starlings and Helmeted Guineafowls vied for top positions, with Greater Flamingos not falling far behind. Many species breed in the WCFP, including Booted Eagles, Spotted Eagle Owls and Blue Cranes, to name only a few special ones. Among the 136 species, many more are bound to excite other birdwatchers who visit WCFP.

Why collect these statistics? For the WCFP, the data provide information on the status of ecosystem health in the different habitats developed through the initial ecological restoration programme and continue to recover after the cessation of mining. The records change over seasons, though the sightings also depend, to some extent, on the weather. Healthy populations and diverse bird communities reflect a healthy environment. The park's 136 bird species reflect that birds get what they need: food, water, shelter, and quiet, safe, nesting sites. Different birds seek different kinds of food in different places, beginning with those unfortunate late worms, as well as insects, mice and other small mammals, reptiles, birds, fish, seeds or flower nectar.

Even though the restored ecosystems are only three decades old, the WCFP already has much to offer birds. We will know whether and how this keeps improving as Nigel and Ronald continue their records. Watch this space. Why not come to watch the WCFP birds for real?

Joh Herschel

Photo News ...



The Booted Eagles were breeding successfully in the West Coast Fossil Park, but sadly not in the last two years. However, it seems that they still find it a useful hunting ground! here with Cape Skink Lizard as prey.

Photo Credit: Nigel McDonald

The Lesser Yellow-legs is still being seen by birders in the West Coast National Park at the Geelbek hide.

Photo Credit: Shaun Ferguson



The immature White-headed Vulture has been seen sporadically along the West Coast for the last few months. Most recently along the R27.

Photo Credit: Ethan Vleggaar



The Short-toed Rock Thrush arrived at the birdbath of Viv Ward in Mauritzbay on 5th March, after flying over 1000km out of range. Only to disappear before the twitchers could get a sighting!

Photo Credit: Viv Ward

International News



World's oldest bird gives birth to yet another chick—at nearly 74 years old

The world's oldest known bird has returned to her home island to hatch yet another chick, at nearly 74 years old. Named Wisdom, the Laysan albatross has been spotted in February 2025 caring for her youngster on Midway Atoll National Wildlife Refuge in the Pacific Ocean.

Like others of her species, Wisdom returns to the same nesting site each year to reunite with her mate and if able, lay one egg. For decades, park officials in the Hawaiian Archipelago observed Wisdom doing this with the same partner (named Akeakamai), but that bird has not been seen for several years, which caused Wisdom to begin courtship dances with other males last year.

The spry septuagenarian is estimated to have produced 50-60 eggs in her lifetime, successfully fledging as many as 30 chicks, according to the expert staff at the refuge 1,300 miles northwest of Honolulu.

Albatross parents share the responsibility of feeding their young by taking turns hunting while the other stays at the nest to watch over the chick.

“So, when Wisdom returns to the nest, her partner’s turn to go hunt for squid, fish and crustaceans,” said a statement from the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service - Pacific Region.

Biologists first identified and banded Wisdom in 1956 after she laid an egg. They determined her estimated age from that event 69 years ago, because the large seabirds aren’t known to breed before age five.

Thousands of the gull-like seabirds begin returning to Midway Atoll each November to nest and raise their young - and Wisdom has been doing this for seven decades, since General Eisenhower was the US president.

Good News Network, February 2025

*Wisdom with her chick. Photo Credit:
Jon Brack/Friends of Midway Atoll
National Wildlife Refuge*



World's tiniest transmitter finds nesting area of rarest migratory shorebird



Spoon-billed Sandpiper dubbed K9, courtesy of Dongming Li.

Using the world's smallest known satellite transmitter, conservationists were able to track a spoon-billed sandpiper, thought to be the world's rarest migratory shorebird. The transmitter revealed new stopovers and nesting areas for an individual known as K9.

"K9 led us to a newly discovered breeding location and habitat, which could be a game-changer for Spoon-billed Sandpiper (SBS) conservation and research in the breeding grounds," Sayam Chowdhury, co-director of the SBS task force, said in an email to Mongabay. "Better understanding of these sites and similar habitats will contribute significantly to the conservation of breeding habitats."

The International Conservation Fund of Canada (ICFC) posted that the world's smallest solar-powered satellite transmitter was glued to the back feathers of a Spoon-billed Sandpiper from Thailand that researchers dubbed "K9" based on the code on its orange leg band. The transmitter, which weighs 1.2 grams and costs \$5,000. Such transmitters have been helping ornithologists discover new sandpiper sites since 2016. Understanding where they spend time can help prevent poaching of the critically endangered species.

There are roughly 490 mature individuals worldwide, and in 2016 they were expected to go extinct within a decade. Conservation successes mean that while the population continues to decline, it's "not as rapidly as before," ICFC director of bird conservation Scott Hecker wrote on the ICFC website. "The hope was that K9's journey would reveal new nesting areas in northeastern Russia, helping efforts to prevent this unique species - with its distinctive spoon-shaped bill - from going extinct," Hecker wrote.

After leaving Thailand on April 4, 2024, the bird used two previously unknown stopovers spots in China. By April 25, it had crossed the Yellow Sea to enter North Korea, from there it flew 2,000km (more than 1,200 miles) to Sakhalin, Russia, before another 2,000km flight to eastern Russia - a remarkable 8,000km (nearly 5,000-miles) one-way migration. "K9 had one final surprise for scientists: the bird didn't settle in its usual coastal habitat. Instead, it chose a barren river valley - a previously unknown nesting site," Hecker wrote, adding that the location is undisclosed to protect the species from egg collectors.

In the SBS November 2024 news bulletin, Katherine Leung with the SBS tracking team wrote that K9 "remained at an undisclosed potential breeding site for two months until early August, suggesting successful breeding, before returning south." She said a follow-up expedition to the new breeding site is being planned. "The entire journey, including the use of stopover sites, highlights the critical importance of protecting key locations, such as those in North Korea," Chowdhury said. He said the task force is already working on a new action plan to protect key sites, identify coastal threats, prevent hunting risks, and enhance conservation efforts for the species.

Kristine Sabillo, 24 Jan 2025asia

Club News and Activities

Tygerberg Bird Club continues our involvement with the Coordinated Waterbird Counts (CWAC)

Across South Africa and Kenya, citizen scientists conduct bi-annual counts of waterbirds at registered waterbodies. Counts are submitted to and the data curated by the University of Cape Town's FitzPatrick Institute of African Ornithology.

CWAC was started in 1992 by the Animal Demography Unit as part South Africa's commitment to international waterbird conservation. Numerous counts are conducted each year, contributing to this unique dataset. Kevin Drummond-Hay co-ordinates the Tygerberg Bird Club's contribution to this conservation project. Here are some of Kevin's latest observations.

"Although this Conservation project has been in operation for almost 33 years, my involvement has only been for the last 24 years. Over this period, I have seen massive changes to the Botrivier Reserve in terms of water conditions and land development (Benguela Cove), that has been a huge contributing factor to the changes that occurred in respect of bird numbers and species observed. The increased boating activity in the estuary has compounded the problem.

On many occasions I have remarked at the dwindling numbers and surely this must be of great concern to Birdlife South Africa and the conservation scientists.

The start of the decline was when Cape Nature decided to blow the mouth artificially back in ca 2005. That is when Red-knobbed Coot started to disappear from the estuary in large numbers (we're talking thousands of birds). Back in 2001, the count for Red-knobbed Coot was in the ten thousand. Today we are fortunate if we actually count any coot at the site.

Grebe numbers have also declined hugely. There used to be thousands of them. Today, the numbers have dwindled to almost ZERO.

We used to see and count many duck species. Nowadays, we are only seeing Yellow-billed Duck in small numbers. This can only be attributed to the lack of food source and the water conditions which prohibit the growth of grass, etc. that these birds feed on and need for nesting material. However, this has been scientifically proven – it's just my observations.

When do we start to worry that the birds will disappear from this waterbody for ever and do something about it?"



TBC members busy counting at the Botriver Lagoon mouth.

A well-deserving couple awarded honorary membership of the club

Rodney and Anke Gray, stalwart members of the club for the last 36 years, are very worthy recipients of an honorary membership from the club. They work quietly, but efficiently behind the scenes, contributing to the smooth running of Tygerberg Bird Club. Here is their journey with the TBC in Rodney's words.

We, Rodney and Anke, met in the mid-1960's whilst working at Onderstepoort. Anke moved to the Cape in 1968. I was able to move in 1969, and we married a year later. Although we were interested in birds and animals, the dual demands of family life and work meant that some things, like birding, music and dinghy sailing, only became part of life much later.

Our introduction to the Tygerberg Bird Club was at Fairmont High School in 1989 and since then, we have always enjoyed the activities of the club. The outings to various venues over the years have given us access to some areas that we could not have visited alone. Many interesting presentations have been given during meetings, both by club members and by visitors. None of this would have happened without the hard work of chairmen and committees over the years. For this we say "Thank You".

We have always tried to take part in most of the activities of the club and to assist where possible. To this end Anke helped with the old education programme and we have both been involved with the Co-ordinated Waterbird Counts (CWAC) at Botrivierlei since mid-1994. I also scanned the early typewritten Kites to PDFs and re-submitted many CWAC records after a database problem.

Some places and our sightings over the years:

- Wilderness: Black-backed Puffback, African Emerald Cuckoo, Black-headed Oriole
- Nature's Valley: Narina Trogon, Grey Cuckooshrike, Black Cuckoo (call only; still to be seen)
- Velddrif salt pans: Red-necked Phalarope, Chestnut-banded Plover, Spoonbills foraging en-mass, Great White Pelicans fishing in unison.
- Grootvadersbosch: Victorin's Warbler, Peregrine Falcon in a near-vertical stoop
- Botrivierlei CWAC: Greater Painted Snipe (M and F), Kittlitz's Plover chicks (tiny balls of fluff on incredibly thin legs)
- Tienie Versveld Nature Reserve: Cape Longclaw displaying, Banded Martin

Outings and Camps:

We are grateful to have been on many memorable outings and camps. Regardless of high or low bird counts, we have always enjoyed being out in the veld and the camaraderie of fellow-birders.

Rodney Gray



Club Outing: Helderberg Nature Reserve - 22 March 2025



Some 20 birders were all excited on this day, hoping to see the European Nightjar at Helderberg Nature Reserve. Alas, it was not to be seen but the Black Duck, Black Crake and Black Saw-wing made up for it. The weather was not ideal with a light drizzle at times, but it did not stop us from seeing a good variety of birds during the walkabout.

Some of the group did another walk after tea and were rewarded with a Jackal Buzzard and some good sightings of Pin-tailed Whydahs. The aerial feeders were spectacular with both the two large Swifts making an appearance. The supposed Marsh Warbler was confirmed to be a Little Rush Warbler. Thanks to all for an enjoyable and relaxing morning and all your input for the bird list. The list of 42 birds also includes the following species amongst others: Common Waxbill, Cape Grassbird, Sombre Greenbul, Olive Thrush, Bar-throated Apalis, Alpine Swift, African Black Swift, Cape Sugarbird, Levillant's Cisticola, Black Sparrowhawk, Malachite Kingfisher, Greater Striped Swallow, Little Swift, Common Moorhen, Purple Heron, Yellow-billed Duck, Reed Cormorant, Malachite Sunbird and Barn Swallow.



Common Moorhen.
Photo credit Pieter Roux

Keith Roxburgh

Club Camp: Kuifkopvisvanger Velddrif - 14 to 16 March 2025

On popular demand 19 TBC members once more enjoyed a weekend camp at Kuifkopvisvanger Farm at Velddrif. The farm is situated along the Berg River (3km from Velddrif), where birds are watched at close quarters as the tide ebb and flows every day. It is great to go for walks or take a chair and watch waders at close range. There is also a small hide from where to watch birds. On the Saturday morning, we went with Jan Kotze to the Kliphoeck Salt pans and saw wonderful waders. This is the best place to see Chestnut-banded Plover, Curlew Sandpiper, Little Stint, Grey and Kittlitz's and White-fronted Plover up nice and close. The special bird on the pans is the Red-necked Phalarope – which has been resident there for seven years already. Our group were spoilt in seeing many more special birds at this pan.

PLEASE NOTE – access to these pans must be arranged with Jan Kotze at Kuifkopvisvanger. The mine is a working site, with big trucks loading salt, so please go there ONLY BY APPOINTMENT with Jan. Back on the farm, Little Tern, African Marsh Harrier, lots of Barn Swallow, Purple and other herons and Black-crowned Night Heron were seen. Bush birding was also good, with lovely birds around our cottages. Some of the group went to



Chestnut-banded Plovers

Laaiplek Harbour and had a nice walk along the boardwalk near the Fish factory in town. A social braai was held at Bleshoender cottage on Saturday evening, with lots of laughs and fun had. Gert and Wiekie were excellent 'braaier's for the group'.



On Sunday morning we had a cruise up the Berg River on the Cracklin' Rosy boat. We were joined by Mike and Beverley Moll. They have been doing CWAC water bird counts on the Berg River for many years, and Bev is now co-ordinating the counts along the river. Living in Velddrif they are an asset to the birding community here. Nice birds seen on the cruise

were waders, African Fish Eagle, Blue Crane, African Swamphen, Three-banded Plover and lots of African Darter and Black-crowned Night Heron. The trip was enjoyed by all. 71 Species were seen from the boat. The weekend list amounted to 105 species. We were lucky with cool weather and were very thankful for the breeze coming off the sea. When passing through Malmesbury and Hopefield on the way to the camp, the temperature was 38 degrees.

Asking the group's opinion, they all said they want to go back to Kuifkopvisvanger in the future.

Brigid Crewe

Club Outing: Spier Wine Estate - 22 February 2025

Thanks to the 23 or more members who joined us for the outing at Spier Wine Estate on this day. It was wonderful company, weather and birding. Among all of us, we identified at least 72



species, possibly more. Note: What we ticked as a Brown-backed Honeybird turned out to be a Klaas's Cuckoo. Here is my list of 70 species that I have identified during my various visits at Spier.

Rufous-breasted Sparrowhawk, Hamerkop, Red-faced Mousebird, Black-crowned Night Heron, Spotted Eagle-Owl, Cape Robin-Chat, Acacia Pied Barbet, House Sparrow, Bar-throated Apalis, Common Buzzard, Malachite Sunbird, Cape Batis, Levillant's Cisticola, Cape Longclaw, African Stonechat, African Pipit, Yellow-billed Kite, Karoo Prinia, Klaas's Cuckoo, Ring-necked Dove, Intermediate Egret, African Paradise Flycatcher, Jackal Buzzard, Peregrine Falcon, Black Saw-wing, Brown-throated Martin, Helmeted Guineafowl, Hadada Ibis, Cape Sparrow, Olive Thrush, Spur-winged Goose, African Dusky Flycatcher, Southern Masked Weaver, Fork-tailed Drongo, African Black Duck, White-rumped Swift, Little Swift, Cape

White-eye, Yellow Bishop, Southern Double-collared Sunbird, Greater Striped Swallow, Lesser Swamp Warbler, Common Waxbill, Cape Bulbul, Western Cattle Egret, Fiscal Flycatcher, Cape Wagtail, Alpine Swift, Cape Weaver, Pin-tailed Whydah, Red-eyed Dove, African Harrier-Hawk, Purple Heron, Malachite Kingfisher, Red-knobbed Coot, African Darter, White-breasted Cormorant, African Sacred Ibis, Barn Swallow, Common Moorhen, Egyptian Goose, Reed Cormorant, Yellow-billed Duck, Little Egret, Blacksmith Lapwing, Cape Canary, Common Starling, Southern Fiscal, Pied Kingfisher and Sweet Waxbill.

Keith Roxburgh



Club Outing: Tokai Forest - 8 January 2025

The first outing of the year was considerably arranged for the afternoon in order to avoid unnecessary frustration for members caught up in the traffic.

Our friends, the baboons provided plenty of entertainment, although some of us, (moi included), regarded them with a mixture of interest and apprehension. They arrived on the scene soon after we arrived, but the baboon monitors expertly nudged them onto the adjacent farmland. This didn't prevent a few of the bolder baboons to linger longer. They approached from a distance and peeped curiously into our cars when a door was opened. We were however reassured by the constant presence of the monitors and the baboon-hotline vehicle.

Keith led the group of 28 people up the forest path. It was a delightful meander with the aroma of pine needles in the air. We spotted 20 bird species in total. Jackal Buzzard and other raptors like Yellow-billed Kite showed up. The Olive Woodpecker provided a lovely sighting and opportunities for taking photos.



The group celebrated Dalene's birthday with cupcakes, while Brian was still incapacitated in hospital after his back-operation and reportedly making steady progress.

One of the members lost a cell phone. A volunteer accompanied her, and they backtracked the entire trail. They stayed away for a long time. In the end, it was Keith to the rescue for the two desperate girls, and the phone was found in the nick of time (in the boot of her car!).

Some members went further afield in the Tokai Forest area while others travelled peacefully home.

Cheryl Grobler

Club Midweek Outing: Intaka Island - 11 December 2024

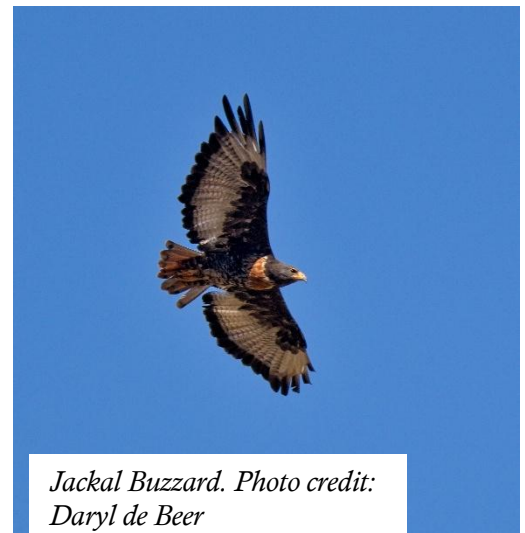
Great weather was the order of the day for the 15 odd members at the Intaka Island Outing. Young Max (a friend of Linda Reynolds) joined us for the first hour; his enthusiasm and love of nature was wonderful to experience and for us to share some of our collective knowledge. The walks started with a turn around the nearly dry pans. The birding was good, as not only the normal bush birds



Purple Heron. Photo credit: Robert Roux

were spotted but a few special ones as well, Water Thick-knees, Brown-backed Honeybird, a Kittlitz's Plover pair with babies, Spotted Thick-knee and both Levillant's and Grey-backed Cisticola. The stop on the hill, looking over the main water body, was good with some nice sightings of Black-crowned Night Heron, Red-billed Teal and a well camouflaged Purple Heron. The bird hides were not as interesting as normal, but the Malachite Kingfisher charmed everyone. Tea at the viewing platform gave us a chance to see the Little Rush Warbler and White-throated Swallows in action and do a bit of socialising. In all 55 species spotted

by the group and the Little Bittern did not appear again. Other species seen on the outing were as follows: Little Egret, Little Bittern, Red-winged Starling, Olive Thrush, Brown-throated Martin, African Black Swift, Red-faced Mousebird, Cape Robin-Chat, Black-winged Kite, Acacia Pied Barbet, Cape Shoveler, African Darter, Reed Cormorant, White-breasted Cormorant, Hartlaub's Gull, Yellow-billed Duck, Grey Heron, Pied Crow, Pin-tailed Whydah, African Sacred Ibis, Karoo Prinia, Little Swift, Helmeted Guineafowl, White-rumped Swift, Water Thick-knee, Cape Canary, Speckled Pigeon, Cape Sparrow, Southern Masked Weaver, Laughing Dove, Blacksmith Lapwing, African Swamphen, Speckled Mousebird, Southern Red Bishop, Red-knobbed Coot, Ring-necked Dove, Common Starling, Cape Wagtail, Kelp Gull, Egyptian Goose, Red-eyed Dove, Cape Spurfowl, Lesser Swamp Warbler and Common Moorhen



Jackal Buzzard. Photo credit: Daryl de Beer

by the group and the Little Bittern did not appear again. Other species seen on the outing were as follows: Little Egret, Little Bittern, Red-winged Starling, Olive Thrush, Brown-throated Martin, African Black Swift, Red-faced Mousebird, Cape Robin-Chat, Black-winged Kite, Acacia Pied Barbet, Cape Shoveler, African Darter, Reed Cormorant, White-breasted Cormorant, Hartlaub's Gull, Yellow-billed Duck, Grey Heron, Pied Crow, Pin-tailed Whydah, African Sacred Ibis, Karoo Prinia, Little Swift, Helmeted Guineafowl, White-rumped Swift, Water Thick-knee, Cape Canary, Speckled Pigeon, Cape Sparrow, Southern Masked Weaver, Laughing Dove, Blacksmith Lapwing, African Swamphen, Speckled Mousebird, Southern Red Bishop, Red-knobbed Coot, Ring-necked Dove, Common Starling, Cape Wagtail, Kelp Gull, Egyptian Goose, Red-eyed Dove, Cape Spurfowl, Lesser Swamp Warbler and Common Moorhen



Little Bittern. Photo credit: Margaret Maciver

Keith Roxburgh

Club outing: Rietvlei Wetland Reserve - 14 December 2024



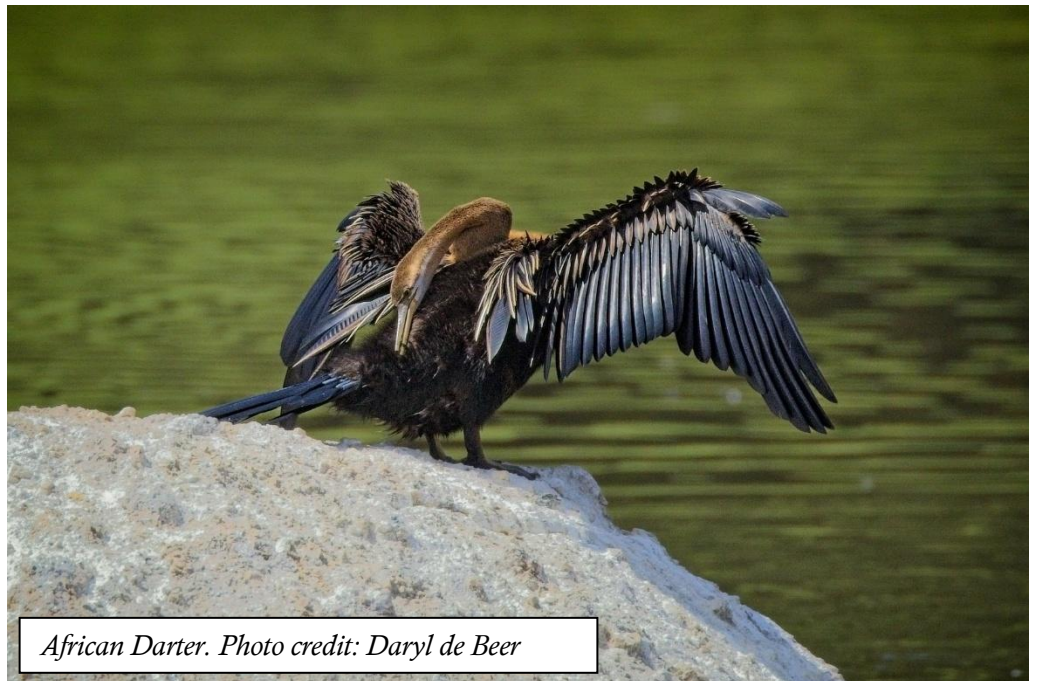
Our year-end outing was held on this day, with the weather pleasantly sunny with a light southerly breeze, strengthening slightly during the morning. Given the time of year, the turnout of 19 members was respectable.

We met near the Education Centre and chose to start the morning with bush-birding. Common species seen included Barn Swallow, Southern Fiscal, Greater Striped Swallow and

Common Starling. We had a fine sighting of a Karoo Prinia and, after hearing a Bar-throated Apalis, some of us saw it dashing across a gap in the bushes. Unfortunately, we failed to find Spotted Thick-knees. Over the water to the west, Spurwing Geese flew towards the R27 and there was a flypast of Greater Flamingo.

Following the water's edge towards the wooden walkway, we found a group of Cape Wagtails on the first dead tree and, as usual the White-throated Swallows were in the second tree. Along the western edge there were Little Egrets, Grey Herons and two Purple Herons. A Whiskered Tern, in breeding plumage, hunted back and forth. One Pin-tailed Whydah male kept the photographers busy for a while.

Along the walkway the Black-winged Kite was perched on "his" tree. Rock Martins were flying around, and a single Southern Red Bishop was displaying. As the westerly bird hide is currently inaccessible, we proceeded to the hide that is maintained by "Friends of Rietvlei". To the east of this hide we found many other species such as Cape Shoveler, Yellow-billed Duck, Kittlitz's Plover, Pied Kingfisher and African Darter. There were also large numbers of Greater Flamingos.



African Darter. Photo credit: Daryl de Beer

It was an enjoyable outing. The species count of 56 might have been higher had we been able to visit the other hide where, in the past, we have found White-faced and Fulvous Whistling Duck as well as Little Grebes.

Rodney Gray

Club Midweek Outing: Darling Farms - 14 September 2024

48 of us were blessed with sunny weather and no wind on this outing! We started the outing at the Duckitt Nurseries wildflower reserve. Cape Clapper Larks were still warming up, and a bit difficult to pinpoint. The road was lined by lots of *Lachenalia* (bleek viooltjies), *Geissorhiza* (Kelkiewyn) and flax. Birding came second as our focus shifted to the wonderful wildflowers.

Next, we visited an orchid house at Duckitt Nurseries. Seeing all the beautiful mass colour blocks of flowers was lovely. We then stopped at the Waylands Flower Reserve. Due to all the rain the reserve was only opened to the public the day before – what a gem. A true FLOWER SPLENDOUR!



Photo credit: Kevin Drummond-Hay

We then went to Grootte Post Winery, where we were greeted by three Blue Crane at a small dam, right next to the road. The group eagerly went for a walk in the veld past the broken 'bird hide' dam - damaged by severe rains in July! The veld was once more lovely. Lots of different wildflowers were everywhere. The "bird of the day"

award went to Lydia Lacerda, who photographed a White-headed Vulture high in the sky at Grootte Post. Many birders chasing 'Cape Province' lists were very envious when the bird was later identified. Darling Hills Road delivered



Pearl-breasted Swallows larks, Capped Wheatear and Rock Martin. The day ended with a picnic under the trees at the nursery. A nice end to a lovely day!

Brigid Crewe

Club Outing: Spier Wine farm - August 2024

An outing to Spier is always exciting but, on this Wednesday, it started off a bit stressful for some of us. The mist and traffic ensured that most of us arrived late for the later than normal start. A bit more disappointment

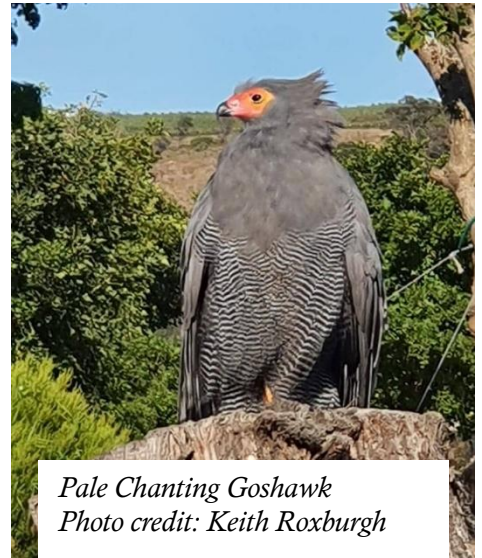


Levaillant's Cisticola
Photo credit: Gert Kotze

awaited as all the vegetation on the dam has been cleared so no lurking Black Crakes or Little Bitten, only the normal water birds such as cormorants and coots. With slowly lifting mist, we started our wonder on search for birds, and we were not disappointed. Black Duck in their ideal habitat of fast flowing water greeted us on the bridge, followed by plenty Yellow Bishops, Cape Weavers, Levaillant's Cisticola and Malachite Sunbirds. The two fiscals were seen and the normal bush birds started to

appear as the sun came out. A quick appearance of the Black Sparrowhawk lifted our spirits. The walk back along the river past the beautiful Proteas gave us lovely sightings of the Dusky Flycatcher and of

course the Swee Waxbills. We were all delighted after trying very hard to spot the African Pipits on the lawn to find a Cape Longclaw, Malachite Kingfisher, and also the African Stonechat. The calling Goshawk ended the day well, before we retreated for coffee and muffins in the sun. Ten people and 46 birds seen – all in all a good day out in nature.



Pale Chanting Goshawk
Photo credit: Keith Roxburgh



Reed Cormorant Photo credit: Kevin Drummond-Hay

Keith Roxburgh



Know Your Birds

Kliphoek Saltworks' famous, Red-Necked Phalarope

Who knows the comings and goings of the phalarope at Kliphoek Saltworks better than the previous owner, Jan Kotze? Here Jan gives us his story of this famous bird ...



“Die Rooihalsfraaiingpoot is sedert 2001 op die Cerebos soutpanne gesien – destyds deur die eienaar van Ark images. Die voeltjie was vir ‘n paar jaar op dieselfde panne gesien. Toe ek by Kliphoek Soutwerke betrokke raak, het ek dit ook later daar gesien.

Die een Rooihalsfraaiingpoot het van 2014 permanent by die Kliphoek panne begin bly. Dit was n groot oomblik toe ek dit die eerste keer in die winter op die panne sien. (Dis dan veronderstel om weg te vlieg!)

Op daardie stadium, het ek reeds vir sowat twee jaar voëls gekyk. Toe was ‘n voël net nog ‘n voël. Met die aankoms van die einste fraaiingspoot, het my belangstelling in voëls werklik eers begin. Dit was vir my baie spesiaal om voëlkykers na die soutpanne te neem om nader aan die voëls te kom en hulle beter te kan sien.

Toe ek die fraaiingspoot in die winter op die panne sien, het ek vir Trevor Hardacker gekontak en gevra om te kom kyk wat aangaan. Ek was nuuskiering om te weet of dit ‘n mannetjie of n wyfie is en hoekom hy/sy nie getrek het nie. Trevor se antwoord was baie drasties – dat dit natuurlik ‘n wyfie is wat te sleg is om te migreer en te gaan broei. Margaret was glad nie hiervan oortuig nie en wou weet hoe Trevor so seker kan wees. Margaret se reaksie het boekdele vir my gesê.

Deur die jare heen was daar al baie voëlkykers hier om die voëltjie te kom sien en vir die meeste is dit 'n 'lifer'. En dan is daar natuurlik die 'twitchers'. Hulle kom altyd weer terug en vind dit baie besonders om die



fraaiingspoot in die winter hier te sien. Tot groepe met buitelandse voëlkykers kom na die panne om ons plaaslike voëltjie te kom bekyk.

Na drie jaar het die broei-kleure vir die eerste keer gewys en dit blyk tog dat dit ‘n wyfie is. (Dit is die wyfie wat broei-kleure kry.) Dit was vir my ‘n baie spesiale oomblik.

Maar nou begin ek te wonder of die fraaiingspoot wel ‘n wyfie is, aangesien daar tot nou toe nog geen teken van ‘n kuiken was nie. So dalk was Margaret tog reg – dat dit n mannetjie is wat te sleg of te lui is om te trek.

Sy kos is mos altyd by hom deur die hele jaar - so hoekom moet hy dan trek?”

Text and pictures: Jan Kotze – Kuifkopvisvanger

Amazing White Storks

The White Stork (*Ciconia ciconia*) is a large bird in the stork family Ciconiidae. Its plumage is mainly white, with black on its wings. Adults have long red legs and long pointed red beaks, and measure on average 100 - 115cm from beak tip to end of tail, with a 155 - 215cm wingspan. The two subspecies, which differ slightly in size, breed in Europe (north to Finland), northwestern Africa, southwestern Asia (east to southern Kazakhstan) and southern Africa.



The White Stork is a long-distance migrant, wintering in Africa from tropical Sub-Saharan Africa to as far south as South Africa, or on the Indian subcontinent. When migrating between Europe and Africa, it avoids crossing the Mediterranean Sea and detours via the Levant in the east or the Strait of Gibraltar in the west, because the air thermals on which it depends do not form over water.

Many White Storks are tracked by people all over the world, both amateurs and professionals, interested in following their journeys and recording the difficulties these birds face in an ever-increasing human centric world. Here are a few interesting stories where the birds' journeys met with that of humankind.

Hailstorm tragedy builds appreciation and awareness for White Stork migrations



Migration routes of White Stork from Europe over Africa

Despite the tragic loss of 22 White Storks in the hailstorm that hit many areas in the Midlands during February 2025, we are reminded that we share these beautiful birds with people around the world.

One of the birds killed during the sudden weather event was ringed with a unique number belonging only to that bird. The ring read 5P705 PLG - PLG being the tag that identifies that this bird was originally ringed in Poland! Through communication with the Polish Ornithological Station, it was established that the White Stork in question was ringed as a chick on the 22nd of June 2015 in a village called Brzezic in Poland. Since then, it has been travelling between Poland and South Africa. One trip alone is 9,175 km, and this is done every year as the storks travel from their breeding grounds in Europe to spend their summers in SA.

The tragedy of the event in the Midlands is the realization that the birds lost will not be able to return to their breeding sites in Europe.

Freeme Wildlife, February 2025

Stjepan & Malena - The Old Man and the Stork

For 24 years, the retired Stjepan has dedicated himself to caring for the stork Malena, who after being injured by a bullet can no longer fly.

A female White Stork has captured the heart of Stjepan Vokic. The trust between man and wildlife is so steadfast that in autumn when Malena's male stork Klepetan flies south, she stays at home with Stjepan. Caring for Malena dictates Stjepan's day. He barely has any time for himself or his friends. He neither allows himself vacations nor visits his sons. Rain or shine, every day he goes fishing for Malena. The film tells a story of a unique friendship between man and animal, of selfless caring and boundless devotion. There is no sacrifice too great for his stork.

The wetlands of the Sava River in Croatia are paradisiacal for storks. The White Storks have always lived in harmony with mankind and in a village where most of the young people have moved to the cities, the migratory storks have become the beloved children of the neighbourhood. Every year after flying south for the winter, at the blossom of spring the storks return to their human family. Each roof in the village has at least one nest. In this village, storks are always welcomed because superstitions state that they bring luck and children to a household and observation show that they provide helping hands for work and toils in the fields.



Authentic.com

How did a stork with a spear through its neck solve the mystery of the migration of birds?

The seasonal disappearance of certain types of migrating birds is no longer a mystery to us, even if we do not always understand precisely how they make those enormous journeys. Until a couple of centuries ago, however, several bizarre theories existed to explain the appearance and disappearance of certain birds at different times of the year.

The philosopher, Aristotle pointed out that the Eurasian crane migrated from the steppes of Scythia to the marshes of the Nile, observations that he could presumably validate from travelers who went around the *terra cognita* of the ancient world. Aristotle surmised that migrating birds such as swallows (aping small reptiles and mammals), simply hibernated in the winter, either in nooks and crannies or under water. Others suggested that they metamorphised into other types of birds, that were better able to cope with the adverse weather. Aristotle's theory was not as bizarre as some that did the rounds. In 1703 a professor from Harvard wrote in a pamphlet that migrating birds flew to the moon!

Thomas Bewick went some way towards solving the mystery of the disappearing swallow - reporting in 1797, that a ship's captain, whose opinion he esteemed, between the islands of Menorca and Majorca saw great numbers of Swallows flying northward.' He put the idea of the birds hibernating at the bottom of pools to rest by observing that swallows frequently roost at night by the sides of rivers and pools, from which circumstances it has been erroneously supposed that they retire into the water.



Bewick's theories, correct as we now know them to be, were just that and what was needed was hard facts to substantiate the concept of avian migration.

That proof came literally out of the skies in 1822. A white stork, *Ciconia Ciconia* was found outside the village of Klütz on the Baltic coast of what is now Germany. Running through it was a 30-inch spear, which had entered by the left-hand side of its body and exited half-way up its neck on the right-hand side, impaling it in a grotesque fashion.

Upon inspection, the spear was found to be made of African wood, prompting the inescapable conclusion that, notwithstanding its injuries, the stork had managed to fly the 2,000 or so miles from the continent of Africa, from which it had migrated. The doubly unfortunate bird was killed, stuffed, and mounted and is on display, to this day in the University of Rostock's Zoological Collection.

Astonishingly, a further twenty-four such birds were found over time, bearing incontrovertible proof that birds do migrate rather than hibernate or morph into something else. Scientists were now able to unlock some of the mysteries of migration, thanks to a spear.

Extracted from Country Life UK

The stork symbolizes rebirth, reinvention and family protection. This profound symbolism transcends time and is present in various cultures.



Storks mate for life and return to the same nest each year.

They often start with a chimney!



Brain teasers

CROSSWORD PUZZLE NO. 20

1		2				3		4		5		6		7
8								9						
10				11				12				13		
								14						
15	16								17					
	18			19				20				21		22
23								24			25			
		26		27	28									
29								30						
31								32				33		
		34						35						

Clues Across

- 1. Active at dusk and dawn
- 6. Male swan
- 8. Well camouflaged
- 9. Bunting named after him
- 10. A vagrant bunting
- 12. Appendage for audio
- 13. Abr. an oxpecker
- 14. Abr. a nightjar
- 15. A wetland
- 17. Abr. an ibis
- 18. Abr. a *Caprimulgus* species
- 19. Capped _ _ _ _ -ear
- 23. Abr. A small skulker in reed beds
- 24. A jovial gull or dove
- 27. Abr. a neighbouring province
- 29. A black conspicuous noisy mimic
- 30. A near-endemic parrot
- 31. A blue-black colour on a brood parasite
- 32. A migrant pelagic species
- 34. An idle cisticola
- 35. A type of gamebird

Compiler: Gerald Wingate

Clues Down

- 1. They live in Swiss chronometers
- 2. Geese associated with the Nile
- 3. An abr. for our metro
- 4. Material used to camouflage a nest
- 5. The "Birding Bible"
- 6. A songbird
- 7. Not cardinal or pope
- 11. A group related to plovers
- 14. Aquatic waders with lobed toes
- 16. Skin between toes
- 20. Abr. for a rare albatross
- 21. Mandible
- 22. Discard after hatching
- 23. A large terrestrial nomad in arid regions
- 25. Abr. A parrot
- 26. A type of heron
- 28. An aggregation of nesting birds
- 33. Abr. a tiny, secretive, hooting skulker

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 in future communication regarding club matters.

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 on 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: gert.k@absamail.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 2025

Honorary President	Brian Vanderwalt	Cell: 082 999 9333
Chairperson	Brigid Crewe	Cell: 082 570 0808
Vice Chairperson	Judy Kotze	Cell: 083 254 0919
Treasurer	Benita Bartlett	Cell: 083 254 8791
Committee Member	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 voël erfenis.

Celebrating 38 years of bringing birders together

Upcoming Club Outings and Activities



May 2025

Wednesday 7 May – Club outing

Thursday 15 May – Club meeting @ 19:30
TBC - A celebration of 33 years of Bird Ringing

Saturday 17 May - Club outing

June 2025

Wednesday 11 June – Club outing

Thursday 19 June – Club meeting @ 19:30
“Birding in the Eastern Highlands of Zimbabwe” –
Corne Rautenbach

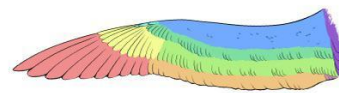
Saturday 21 June - Club outing

RESCUED A BIRD?

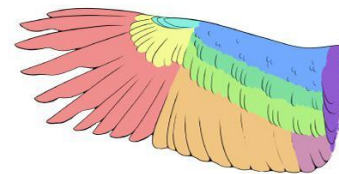
West Coast Bird Rescue
CapeNature Permitted Wildlife Rehabilitation Facility
Cape Town
079 050 4796



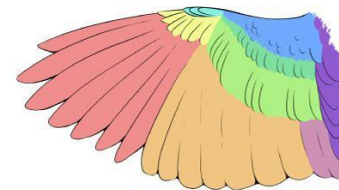
Send us a
WhatsApp



Active Soaring Wings
Long and narrow. Excellent for soaring (flying without flapping) over water as long as wing currents are favorable.
Seen in: Gulls, albatrosses



Passive Soaring Wings
Long and broad wings ending in long primary feathers with wide gaps in between. These slots help the bird take advantage of columns of rising hot air, allowing it to soar without reliable wind currents.
Seen in: Vultures, eagles



Elliptical Wings
Optimized for bursts of fast, tightly controlled flight. Excellent at taking off quickly, maneuvering through branches, and avoiding predators. Ordinary flight is slow and usually requires flapping.
Seen in: Sparrows, crows



High-Speed Wings
Medium-long and narrow, optimized for sustained speed.
Seen in: Falcons, swallows



Hovering Wings
Small relative to body size. Excellent for tightly controlled flight and hovering. Articulates mostly at the shoulder rather than the wrist.
Seen in: Hummingbirds

- Primary feathers
- Secondary feathers
- Tertiary feathers
- Primary coverts
- Alula
- Greater secondary coverts
- Median secondary coverts
- Marginal secondary coverts
- Scapulars

Wing Shapes

References: Cornell Lab of Ornithology. "Birds and their Wing Shapes." <https://www.birds.cornell.edu/k12/wp-content/uploads/2018/11/Bird-Wing-Types-Handout.pdf>
Noll, Paul. "Birds, A Miracle of Flight." <http://paulnoll.com/OregonBirds/Avian-flight.html>

