



Laniarius

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Notice to contributors

Laniarius is published three times annually. Deadlines for contributions are 1 March, 1 July and 1 November. Articles should preferably be e-mailed to the Editor, but may also be posted to the club post box. Contributions and advertisements are accepted at the discretion of the Editor. Digital photographic images are always welcome.

Kennisgewing aan bydraers

Laniarius word drie keer jaarliks uitgegee. Spertye vir bydraes is 1 Maart, 1 Julie en 1 November. Artikels moet verkieslik per e-pos aan die redakteur gestuur word, maar kan ook na die klub-adres gepos word. Aanvaarding van bydraes en advertensies word aan die diskresie van die redakteur oorgelaat. Digitale foto's is altyd welkom.

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Credits

Front cover: Crested Barbet/Kuifkophoutkapper by Gina Wilgenbus.

Birding facts taken from *Everything you Always Wanted to Know About Birds* by Stephen Moss.

Cartoons from *The Crazy World of Bird Watching* by Peter Rigby.



Editorial/ Redaksioneel

I am writing this editorial as stand-in editor as the first October rains have arrived. They have been late in coming, but those first welcome rains of the new summer are such a joyous occasion and bring a burst of energy and provide fresh impetus for whatever we are busy doing or planning. The birds are galvanised by the early rains and I usually note a spike in breeding activity at this time and bird-song is particularly striking at this time of year. Already the Red-chested Cuckoo's distinctive song can be heard and the delightful African Paradise Flycatcher has arrived. What would our lives be without these wonderful creatures? I cannot imagine a life without birds and not being able to observe them in their natural environment.

I have been involved with the *Laniarius* publication in one way or another for well over 20 years, either by contributing a regular column, or by being the editor for some of that time, or by being on the sub-committee, sourcing articles, editing and sometimes helping with articles. A newsletter acts as a window to the club and it is vitally important that we document the club's activities and keep a record of the projects and events that have taken place over time. When I look back over the newsletters dating back to the first copies I received over 30 years ago I can see how technology has driven the changes in the club over the years and how birding – and birders – have evolved over that time. Members used to write in evocative prose about birds that they found and about

their adventures in different parts of the country. You had to use words to paint the picture of what you were saying as it was not possible to include photographs in an article for a club newsletter! It was only in fairly recent times that with the onset of digital photography that articles could be liberally illustrated with the subject matter of the discussion. It has become a lot easier, but it has also made some of us take short cuts and forget that it is still necessary to put your thoughts into words, and to share this with like-minded people. I know I should do that more often.

I must say how appreciative the editorial team is with the contribution made by a number of regular contributors. *Laniarius* would not be published without these contributions and you just have to look at the authors of articles to see how the exploits and opinions of many people regularly fill these pages, and that without their writing this newsletter would just not be the same. Thank you to those of you who heed the call for contributions to *Laniarius* and who share their experiences with other members of the club.

This edition has a good mix of articles about interesting trips undertaken by members, to experiences in the field, to the enjoyment of finding a special bird. I trust you will enjoy reading the various accounts and that this will stimulate you to write about what interests you! May I wish the very best of summer birding to all of you.

Regards/Groete

André Marx



Chairman's Report/ Voorsittersverslag

Philip Calinikos

I was lucky enough to have been gifted a bird book a number of years ago that was totally different to the others in my collection at the time. It was titled *Shakespeare's Birds* written by Peter Goodfellow and beautifully illustrated by Peter Hayman. The book clearly portrays Shakespeare's love of nature and the fact that he mentions over fifty different birds in his writings. I must admit to being a bit of an ignoramus when it comes to Shakespeare's works other than battling ineffectively through the prescribed plays at school. I do however of course remember the following famous line from Hamlet, "to twitch or not to twitch, that is the question!"

I was reminded of this quote when I was recently asked by a member what the difference was between a birder, a birdwatcher and a twitcher. In Shakespeare's times of course a birder was regarded as someone who hunted birds with firearms and was interchangeable with the term fowler. In 1969 a *Birding Glossary* appeared in the American *Birding* magazine which gave the following definitions:

Birder. The acceptable term used to describe the person who seriously pursues the hobby of birding. May be professional or amateur.

Birding. A hobby in which individuals enjoy the challenge of bird study, listing, or other general activities involving bird life.

Bird-watcher. A rather ambiguous term used to describe the person who watches birds for any reason at all, and should not be used to refer to the serious birder.

The term Birder therefore appears to define someone more serious than just a birdwatcher and would include someone who studies all aspects of birds including their calls and not purely their looks! Unfortunately other articles I have read suggest otherwise and actually place the birdwatcher

on a higher pedestal than that of a run of the mill Birder.

Twitching on the other hand is a British term used to mean "the pursuit of a previously located rare bird". The term originated in the 1950s, when it was used for the nervous behaviour of Howard Medhurst, a British birdwatcher. The main goal of twitching is often to accumulate species on one's lists and includes travelling long distances to "twitch" birds that have been previously identified by someone else.

The development of information technology has had an incredible effect on the way that news and knowledge can now be spread around the globe in nano-seconds. As a result the "art" of twitching has grown exponentially amongst the birding community. It has also added a sense of competition to our past-time which many feel makes it more stimulating and worthwhile. No longer satisfied with watching the resident pair of Cape Sparrows going about their daily lives in our garden we now rush around spending thousands of Rands to try and see the latest poor vagrant that was unfortunate enough to be blown across the Atlantic Ocean while migrating between North and South America... before it passes away from exhaustion! This was graphically illustrated by the recent discovery of a Rufous-tailed Scrub Robin at Zeekoeivlei in Cape Town, a bird whose compass had let it down terribly, resulting in it reverse migrating to the south instead of the north. Within a few weeks over a thousand twitchers had been to tick it and add it to their Southern African and South African life lists.

There is no doubt that the primeval thrill of the chase still lurks deep within our psyche and that we are ecstatic when we successfully track down the next lifer. Unfortunately there is the danger that we allow this passion to dominate all else and forget about the birdwatching/birding side of our beloved pastime. As Shakespeare wrote: "to

twitch or not to twitch that is the question”.

At the recent African Bird Fair I was chatting to someone who is known to have discovered a number of rarities and vagrants around South Africa and who could easily fall into the definition of “twitcher”. He described to me in intimate detail the roosting habits of the pair of African Grey

Hornbills that had recently colonised his garden in Pretoria and that he had been observing every evening since.

So maybe there is a way of combining it all?

Yours in birding

Philip

BLNG Vulture Fundraising Raffle

Annali Swanepoel

Since April this year the BLNG committee has been considering a fundraising project. The fundraising became a reality when Karen Coetzer donated two of her paintings as prizes. In February Bryan Groom had already donated a portfolio of 12 colour plates of Dick Findlay, which he inherited some years back. The tickets were printed and the committee was soon convincing everyone with a wallet to part with R100. We are very pleased to announce that we raised R15,700.

The Tuesday night prize giving function was scheduled to coincide with International Vulture Awareness Day – 3 September. On the 6th of September we had Andre Botha from the Endangered Wildlife Trust as guest speaker. He was then the program manager at EWT, but has since been promoted into the stratosphere. He

talked on Vultures and the challenges they face here in Africa.

The main winners of the raffle draw were Klaus Rust – who couldn’t stop smiling the rest of the evening, Con Falconnier, who was unfortunately not present to toast his good luck, and Proffie Meyer, who walked away with the Finlayson plates. Then the party started in earnest.

The BLNG wine we enjoyed and sold was excellent. The cheeses that complimented the wine turned out to be a venerable smorgasbord of international cheeses. Thank you Rita for all the research you put into this and the beautiful way in which you and all your helpers presented this. Thank you Philip for the wine, Riana for serving and selling it and everybody else who turned up to enjoy the evening with us.





A Bird's World

Two species vie for the title of the world's most widespread wild bird. Arctic Tern and Cattle Egret, both of which have been recorded on all seven continents. The Cattle Egret (now split into a Western and Eastern form) colonised Australia from Asia and North America from Africa (via South America). Wilson's Storm-petrel is found over most of the world's southern oceans, though is less common north of the Equator. Several waders, notably Sanderling and Ruddy Turnstone, are found on most of the world's coasts, from the Americas and Europe to Africa and Australia. The most widespread passerine is the Barn Swallow, which occurs on every continent apart from Antarctica.

Voëlgeluide soos ek dit hoor

Estelle Raath

- Die Witrugeend (White-faced Duck) roep: *koe-wee, koewee* soos om iemand nader te roep.
- Die Swempie (Coqui Francolin) roep homself: *swempie swempie*.
- Die Bospatrys (Crested Francolin) roep: *bier en konjak, bier en konjak*.
- Die Bosveldfisant (Swainson's Spurfowl) skree: *kwalie kwalie*.
- Terwyl die Laeveldpatrys (Shelley's Francolin) se liedjie *I drink your beer, I drink your beer* alom bekend is.
- Ons gewone Tortelduif (Cape Turtle Dove) roep: *koe koerdoek koe koerdoek sy maatjie in die boom, of, werk stadig werk stadig*.
- Die Grootringduif (Red-eyed Dove) nooi hartlik: *Kom soen my nou, kom soen my nou*.
- 'n Papegaaiduif (African Green Pigeon) roep afwisselend: *terreliet terreliet met kor kor*.
- Die Bosloerie (Narina Trogon) het daai spookagtige en misterieuse *hoeh hoeh hoeh* wat jou hare laat rys.
- 'n Rooiwangmuisvoël (Red-faced Mousebird) in vlug sê: *pee-wee-wee*.
- Die Rooi- en Geelbekneushoringvoëls (Southern Red-billed and Yellow-billed Hornbills) het beide die kenmerkende *wakka wakka* skree wat al vinniger word.
- Die Rooikophoutkapper (Black-collared Barbet) se *poedie poe poedie pooh* en die Kuifkophoutkapper (Crested Barbet) se aanhoudende ge *tjiiirrrr* is algemeen bekende geluide in ons tuine.
- Rooibekkelaelaars (Green Wood Hoopoe) se geluid is nie verniet bekend as klomp ou vrouens se kekkellag nie!
- Die Rooiwangnaguil (Rufous-cheeked Nightjar) klink soos n kragopwekker masjintjie wat aaneen tjiiirr.
- Die Donkernaguil (Freckled Nightjar) klink weer soos die geblaf van n kefferhondjie.
- Die Rooiborslaksman (Crimson-breasted Shrike) het daardie diep *klokklok tjok tjok* geluid.
- 'n Bontroklaksman (Brubru) se roep klink soos 'n ou telefoon se gelui.
- Die Swartkroontjagra (Black-crowned Tchagra) vra duidelik "*wie het my wurmpie gevat?*"
- Die Sneeubal (Black-backed Puffback) het 'n duidelike *tjeek-view tjeek view* roep.
- Die Oranjeborsboslaksman (Orange-breasted Bush-shrike) se rympte: "*Coffee tea or me*" is al orals bekend!
- Die Spookvoël (Grey-headed Bush-shrike) se geluid laat mens weer dink aan die geluid as mens 'n nat vinger oor wynglasrand laat sing.

Dit is vir my glad nie maklik om geluide te verbaliseer en uit te druk nie! Ek weet wat ek hoor maar die beskryf daarvan is maar goor!

Caprivi camp: August 2016

Annali Swanepoel

On a blustery winter's Saturday the activities committee of BLNG met at Rob Geddes' farm. All sorts of exciting ideas for camps and outings were thrown around, amongst them a trip to the Caprivi ostensibly to see the Yellow-Throated Leaflove. This was shortly after Rob had returned from his and Dawie Rotteveel's trek to Katima Mulilo where they feasted their eyes on the elusive little Leaflove. It was decided that this was going to be BLNG's main adventure for 2016. I have never been to Botswana and the Caprivi and mine was the first booking for the trip.

Travelling in convoy with the lovely Karin (our leader for the tour) and her steady support, Kobus leading the way, we headed up the N1, at Modimolle onto the R33 to Lephale (where we slept), crossing into Botswana at the Groblers Bridge border post, then via Selebi Phikwe and Francistown we travelled to Nata for a sleepover at Elephant Sands and our first taste of camping and a spot of wildlife. The long drive was made short by bantering, jokes, and the camaraderie of staunch friendship forged by a common love of birds. We arrived at Elephant Sands as dusk set in.

Elephant Sands

The photo of Elephant Sands tells most of the story. Elephants are left to roam the camp with no restrictions on where or when. The management of Elephant Sands insanelly abandoned all safety to the vagaries of the elephants' minds, which visitors have to gauge in order to reach the safety of their tents.

Under normal circumstances I am a perfectly predictable, ostensibly reasonable and a manifestly balanced individual. However when it comes to elephants and snakes I revert to my cave woman instincts – fight or flight. This is accompanied with all the trappings of extreme fear – a surge of overwhelming panic, palpitations, profuse sweating, dizziness and shortness of breath.

I was safely delivered at my tent but in a moment of madness I ventured outside to chat with a fellow birder who happened to have worked in the Kruger for fifteen years. He assured me he could read the behaviour of elephants as if he wrote the book on elephant thought and hinted that he was actually the original elephant whisperer himself. All this



Annali Swanepoel



Dudley confronting the elephant

happened while we had our backs to an opening between my tent and the next, watching the elephants at the watering hole. A low, agitated voice normally associated with the chronically insane, alerted us to look behind us. Two metres behind us loomed a huge black beast bearing down on us with no uncertain tread. My newfound friend admonished me to not run. Till today I wonder what made him think I would listen to him when I could see with my very own eyes running was what should come next. I was not going to be the idiot some village had lost, and being read about in the Sunday Times and the Botswana Tribune. In a flash I turned on my heels, scaled the steps and disappeared into my tent.

The elephant however did not leave it at that. She came around the tent to the steps and not finding me set her sights on my friends. The Kruger veteran somehow managed to chase her away. He did later admit it was rather touch-and-go because the elephant had found a diversion she wasn't going to let go of easily. Well done, Dudley! (I now know a surge of overwhelming fear and profuse sweating, dizziness and shortness of breath only comes after you managed to save your life.)

Birding camps find birders usually in combinations of personalities one wouldn't think of putting together, except perhaps in an extremely severe famine or a city under siege. And what one birder considers the obvious solution to a problem, I for one may consider a life-threatening course of action.

We had been amongst others, on the Chobe at Kasane where we happily logged the

Collared Palm-thrush, and then bounced our way from Katima Mulilo down a rough gravel road to Kalizo Lodge, nestling on the grassy banks of the Zambesi. Towards the lodge a marshy wetland threw all sorts of surprises at us. For me the happiest was the flocks of Pygmy Geese floating among the water lilies.

One balmy afternoon we were hunting there for the Marsh Warbler and the Luapula Cisticola. Following Rob, our guide, our little group had thinned to a mere seven birders as we reached the end of the inner loop of the wetland. From here our vehicles were parked in a westerly direction across the wetland. Nobody was going to cut across the reed bed and swamp as crocs were spotted a mere kilometre upstream the previous day. Or so I thought.

I started birding to reach that state of nirvana where I am immediately at one with life and at peace with all and sundry in my life. Birding was going to be my nature cloistered, silent devotion to complete serenity. As my eyes swept one more time across the reeds and swamp in front of me there was this little brown hat bobbing up and down amongst the reeds. Then came a little arm up holding on to a huge camera-lens combination. I have to admit I am a little slow in the uptake as it took me a couple of breaths to realize, the swamp in front of us was at least 1.7 metres deep, and one of us was not going to go the slow route all the way back to the vehicles, but was cutting straight across the marsh to beat us by at least 40 minutes to the vehicles. For one giddy, careless moment I was serenely unperturbed but then the worry ball hit me. I am of a suitably hysterical nature to view this event as a moral dilemma. We couldn't leave him to forge his way across the swamp and maybe never make it, and we couldn't just go after him, wring his little neck and tell him what he was doing was insanely scary. With abated breath we watched the brave little birder obstinately scaling the opposite bank of the swamp to slide down again, and again and again. After a battle that lasted the better part of an hour he did manage to crawl out, camera intact but with my nerves frazzled. Thank goodness we didn't



Annali Swaneipoel

Yours truly, Rob and Nellie



On the Zambesi

have to go and explain to the Botswana police how we lost one of our own to a crocodile. With my propensity for drama or is it called melodrama, this little incident convinced me I got into the birding gene pool while the lifeguard wasn't watching.

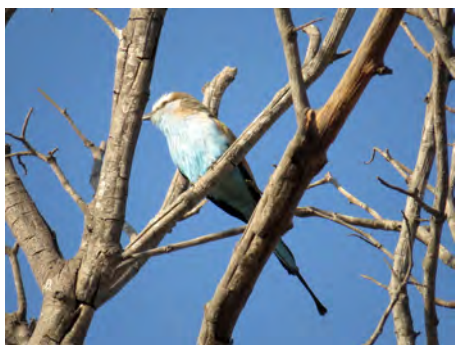
The week in the Caprivi was a hodgepodge of the most wonderful birding – flushing a bevy of Fiery-necked Nightjars at a camp for American hunters shooting hippos for trophies, running into sandbanks on the Zambesi to get a close look at Skimmers and Finfoot, calling the Racket-tailed Roller to show himself, meeting Schalow's Turaco in person, and loads more wonderful birding experiences.

We found our way back to Francistown the following Saturday. In the huge vastness of Botswana, disaster struck. The vehicle we travelled in hit a Kimberley size pothole and two wheels were written off simultaneously. The next day our travelling configuration changed and me and Nellie found a single seat for the two of us to get us to Pretoria. Tied to each other with a single safety belt, the ten hours back home was shortened by numerous stories, jokes and reminiscing. We did create some interest en-route as Nellie spoke Tswana like a Botswana Tswana. Tswana is her first language having been born and bred in Botswana.

Francistown was a nightmare of road works and detours but undaunted we hailed a patrolling police vehicle, pushed Nellie out of

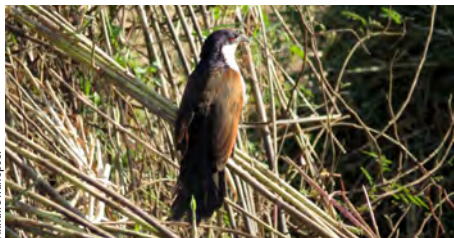
the door and instructed her to arrange a police vehicle to lead the way out of town. She managed this with all sorts of blessings bestowed on family and friends, and health and prosperity for anybody in need of it. If not for that we would still have been circling round the streets of Francistown.

Nellie's charm and Tswana did another good deed. As speed traps are a rather uncommon sight in Botswana one was tempted to pick up speed once one slowed down for a 60 km sign. Which was exactly what happened. We were pulled off the road by a lone cop manning his camera. He told us to wait our turn and then instructed us to explain to the chief in charge why we exceeded the speed limit.



Annali Swaneipoel

The Racket-tailed Roller, Katima Mulilo



Coppery-tailed Coucal/ Grootvleiloerie

What Nellie told the traffic cop is still a mystery but she made such good friends that we didn't get a speeding ticket. Considering the amount of grinning and giggling between Nellie and

the cop I suspected he was already discussing lobola by the time we left. They were still waving with a huge amount of flashing of teeth when we got back into the vehicle and drove off. Thank you Nellie. You are a real star and a very tangible asset in Botswana for one and anywhere else for two!

We never did see the Yellow-throated Leaflove. But now we have a reason to return there. And what a lovely prospect this is!

Thank you Karin, Rob and Dawie for a memorable Caprivi caper. Thank you to all the new and old friends who made this a trip to remember. And a special thank you to Marianne and Leon who took care of Kobus while Karin took care of us. 🐾

Drie Devon dae: 15-17 Julie 2016

Estelle Raath

Ons groepie van 11 voëlkykers kom drip-drip aan op Basson Familieplaas in Devondistrik. Ons maak ons tuis in die groot ou plaasopstal met perde, beeste, skape en honde oral om ons! Met skemer omtrent 17:00 is ons uit om uile te gaan soek onder begeesterde Henk Nel (van BirdLasser faam). Die temperatuur wys in kar dis 0°C buite! Henk sit in die vensterbank van Elouise se Fortuner met spotlight en die temperatuur daal in die kar na benede vriespunt! Ons word ryklik beloon met 3 pragtige Nonnetjiesuile (Western Barn Owl) en later 2 Gevlekte Ooruile (Spotted Eagle Owl). Gelukkig wag 'n heerlike vuur en braaiplek in die eetsaal vir ons en kon ons gou outdooi.

Saterdag is ons voor 07:00 weer uit en ry die wêreld met sy panne en landerye plat. Groot swerms Bloukraanvoëls (Blue Cranes) vlieg oor en gaan sit in gestroopte mielieland vir goeie besigtiging. Later kondig die krok-krok geluid 3 pragtige Bloukorhane (Blue Korhaan) se aankoms aan. Verder was ons geseënd

met klomp Kalaharipatryse (Orange River Francolin), 5 Sekretarisvoëls (Secretarybird), Grootrooivalke (Greater Kestrel), en Kransvalke (Rock Kestrel).

By die verskeie damme is ons bederf met Groot- en Kleinflaminke (Greater and Lesser Flamingo). Agt verskillende eendsoorte en die Swartnekdoobertjie (Black-necked Grebe) met sy spierwit nek in winter! Daar was ook Vlakte- en Pienkbeklewerikke (Spike-heeled and Pink-billed Lark) en Kwartelvinkies (African Quailfinch) was van die ander "specials" wat ons gesien het!

'n Groot dankie aan die BLGN-komitee wat soveel moeite doen om vir ons hierdie groot verskeidenheid heerlike uitstappies te reël. Baie dankie ook aan Elouise Kalmer ons leier en Henk Nel van BirdLasser wat geen steen, bos of dam onaangeraak het om ons al die baie spesiale voëls van die omgewing uit te wys nie. (Baie dankie veral Henk met jou geduld om al die ou anties daar so geduldig BirdLasser kundig te maak!) 🐾

Kalahari roofvoëltoer: 19-28 Maart 2016

Frik du Plooy

Deelnemers was Martin en Paula Steyn, Marié Ueckermann, Johan Snyman, Chris, Julian en Frik du Plooy en Wanda Louwrens.

Vrydag 18 Maart

Die Kalahari roep! Nog een slapie dan ry ons na Olifantshoek. Almal skarrel om alles gereed te kry. Die koop van muise het die hoogste prioriteit gekry. Mens kan nie gaan roofvoëls vang sonder muise nie! Die Whatsapps het behoorlik rondgevlieg om 'n "Pet Shop" te kry wat nog muise verkoop! Sommiges het net nie voorraad gehad nie. Eindelijk! Ons kon 24 muise kry. Verder moet daar ook genoeg hokkies en kos vir hulle gekoop word, want hulle moet mooi opgepas en versorg word. Nog 'n krisis! Johan moes Donderdag nog hospitaal toe vir 'n operasie aan sy voet! Gelukkig is hy Vrydagmiddag ontslaan en so op krukke en 'n klomp verbande om die voet was hy reg om saam te gaan!

Saterdag 19 Maart

Die wekker lui om 03:00! Vroegopstaan het al sinoniem met ring geword en die dag was geen uitsondering nie. Teen kwart voor vyf was almal gereed en het die drie Mazda bakkies se neuse weswaarts gery. Ontby by Vryburg by Mam's Foods was heerlik en na 'n lekker koppie koffie, is die bal-chatri's gelaai met muise. Van Vryburg af het die drie bakkies elkeen 'n ander koers ingeslaan. Omdat dit veiliger is om langs 'n stil grondpad uit te gooi vir roofvoëls, het elke span 'n ander grondpad na Olifantshoek toe geneem.

Frik en Wanda het eerste by The Ranch naby Olifantshoek aangekom, want hulle het die kortste pad gekies. In die harwar om alles af te laai en die muise te versorg het Frik per ongeluk oor die bal-chatri gery – dit was so plat soos 'n pannekoek! Wat 'n ramp! Mens kan

nie roofvoëls vang sonder 'n bal-chatri nie! Gelukkig het Marie tot sy redding gekom en kon hy hare leen vir die res van die toer.

Chris se span het keer op keer voor 'n hek te staan gekom wat gesluit was en hulle moes noodgedwonge omdraai. Met die gevolg dat hulle eers na donker by The Ranch aangekom het. Julian het darem gebel om te vra dat Oupa solank krummelpap maak, want dit was hulle kosmaakbeurt.

Martin, Paula en Marie het ook eers ná donker daar aangekom. Die Google Maps het hulle ook in doodlooppaie laat beland en hulle moes telkens terugdraai om weer 'n nuwe pad te soek na Olifantshoek. Dit het paaie gewys waar daar nog nooit eers 'n pad was nie!

Teen agt uur die aand was almal darem daar. Die pap en sous was gaar en Johan het ingespring om die wors te braai terwyl die ander afgelaai en nes geskop het.

Chris se span het gespog met 4 roofvoëls (wat 3 Grootrooivalke (Greater Kestrel) en een Bleeksingvalk (Pale Chanting Goshawk) ingesluit het vir die dag, Frik s'n met twee (twee Bleeksingvalke) en Martin se span was ongelukkig nie suksesvol nie.

Sondag 20 Maart

Die wekker het 05:00 gelui (gelukkig bietjie later as die vorige dag)! Die drie Mazda's het almal in 'n noord-westelike rigting op drie verskillende paaie vertrek na ons volgende slaapplek Nerap Game Lodge op die Askham-pad.

Die pad wat Frik en Wanda moes ry het vir meer as 200 km deur klowe en passe gegaan met plate geel blommetjies wat na 'n bietjie reën te voorskyn gekom het. Te mooi! Dit het net soos Namakwaland se blomme gelyk!

Frik en Wanda het beter gedoen as die vorige dag met drie Bleeksingvalke. Die laaste



Bleeksingvalk/ Southern Pale Chanting Goshawk

twee is 13 km van die plaashek af gevang, terwyl twee eenvoudig nie vir die bal-chatri wou afkom nie. Frik en Wanda was weer eerste by die plaashek en was verlig dat die bestemming amper bereik was want die kamp was nog net 300 m van die hek af. Omdat Wanda nog met die bal-chatri op haar skoot gesit het, het Frik uitgeklim, die hek oopgemaak en deurgery, weer uitgeklim en die hek toegemaak en dit was met die wegtrek slag dat die Mazda se agterwiele in die sagte sand weggesak het! En daar sit hulle vas en die bakkie se wiele draai net in die rondte, nie vorentoe nie en ook nie agtertoe nie! Al genade was om die eienaar, Willie de Bruin te bel. En ja, hy sal kom help, maar ons moet solank die bande afblaas na 1.5 bar. Maar ons het nie 'n lugdrukmeter nie! Willie se instruksies was: 'Blaas die bande vir 60 sek af, dan sal dit omtrent reg wees.' Intussen het Chris se bakkie ook opgedaag. Vinnig is die bande afgeblaas en toe Willie 10 minute later opdaag met 'n trekstang het hy Frik se bakkie lag-lag uitgesleep. Hy vertel toe dat hy altyd sy bande afblaas na 1.5 bar – iets wat ons nie gedoen het nie.

Chris se bakkie het weer geseëvier met vyf Bleeksingvalke plus 'n hervangs ('retrap'). Om die kampvuur die aand het Chris vertel dat hulle die laaste 13 km vier Bleeksingvalke gevang het, waarvan een met 'n splinternuwe ring aan. Omdat almal dieselfde laaste stukkie pad na die plaas toe moes ry, was Chris hulle 'n halfuur agter Frik se bakkie. Daar was toe

dus 'n kans om verby dieselfde roofvoëls te ry en dit was toe ook so! Een Bleeksingvalk wat Wanda vroeër die middag gering het, met ringnommer 860276, het Chris 'n halfuur later weer gevang – dit was nie net 'n "Same Day Retrap" nie, dit was 'n "Same Hour Retrap"! Twee ander Bleeksingvalke op die laaste stukkie pad, wat nie vir Frik se bal-chatri wou afkom nie, is ook deur Chris-hulle gevang.

Martin-hulle se pad het deur 'n natuurreservaat geloop waar hulle nie kon uitgooi nie en tog het hulle vier roofvoëls oppad gekry.

So in totaal was daar dus reeds 18 roofvoëls gevang.

Maandag 21 Maart

Die jonges, Chris, Julian, Paula, Martin en Marie het vroeg opgestaan en by 'n watergat gaan nette opslaan vir sandpatryse. Wat 'n fees! Almal behalwe Chris (wat hulle al voorheen gering het) het óf 'n Kelkiewyn (2) óf 'n Gevlekte Sandpatrys (5) gekry om te ring! Namakwadiifes kom algemeen daar voor en 21 van hulle het elk 'n ringetjie gekry. Die Versamelvoëls, wat BLSA se voël van die jaar is, was so volop dat ons 61 daarvan gering het – 'n totaal van 118 voëls vir die dag! Paula was ook gelukkig om 'n pragtige Gryslaksman te kon ring. Laat-middag het Julian nog 'n Grootrooivalk vir die roofvoëlsy bygevoeg (nou 19) toe hy die een op die plaas met 'n "Kestrel trap" gevang het.

Dinsdag 22 Maart

Chris en sy span het toe dit nog donker was vertrek na Askham. Hulle het nog vyf Bleeksingvalke gekry – twee oppad na Askham en nog twee op die Noenieput-pad. Martin se voertuig het drie Bleeksingvalke opgelewer in die Van Zylsrus-omgewing asook die hoogtepunt van die dag, 'n Edelvalk! Die totaal vir die roofvoëls was nou op 28.

Woensdag 23 Maart

Chris, Julian en Johan het die grondpad Upington toe geneem na die Kalahari



Versamelvoël/ Sociable Weaver

Gastehuis, so 50 km noord van Upington. Hulle fonds vir die dag was twee Grootrooivalke plus drie Bleeksingvalke.

Frik en Wanda het die teerpad na Askham geneem en het groot opwindning beleef, toe 'n Breëkoparend afgekom het vir die twee wit muise in die bal-chatri. Dit het oor die draadhok gesweef met die yslike pote wat afhang – reg om die muis te vang, toe 'n groot vragmotor dit verwilder het. Wat 'n teleurstelling! Die dag is darem goed afgesluit met 'n Bleeksingvalk.

Martin, Paula en Marie het al langs die Molopo-rivier gery en elkeen het 'n Bleeksingvalk gekry. Die totaal vir die roofvoëls was nou op 37.

Donderdag 24 Maart

Die jonges was weer so fluks om vyfuur op te staan en te gaan nette opsit by die Kalahari Gastehuis se jagkamp. Die “sick, lame and lazy” het laat geslaap! Die nette het interessante spesies opgelewer soos die Rooioogtiptol wat 'n westelike verspreiding het, asook die dorre westelike ras van die Gewone Fiskaallaksmen, met sy prominente wenkbroustreep. Verder was 'n Bontkiewiet en 'n paar Koringvoëls spesiaal.

Chris en Julian het later die middag ges van Upington gaan soek vir nog roofvoëls. Net buite Upington het hulle die eerste twee Kransvalke van die week gevang. Naby die



Suidelike Fiskaallaksmen/ Southern Fiscal

Namibiese grens het 'n beweging hulle oog gevang. Die bakkie is omgedraai en hulle kry 'n Sekretarisvoël wat verstrengel was in 'n draad. Goeie spanwerk het gemaak dat die Sekretarisvoël binne minute uit die draad bevry is. Hulle het die stukke plekke skoon gewas en die voël soveel as moontlik water gegee om te drink. Na 30 minute se rehabilitasie is asem opgehou en 'n baie emosionele oomblik het verander in dankbaarheid toe die Sekretarisvoël opstyg en vlieg! 'n Verdere Bleeksingvalk het die dag afgerond. Die totaal vir die roofvoëls het nou op 41 gestaan.

Vrydag 25 Maart

Die oggend het elke bakkie weer 'n ander koers ingeslaan. Frik en Wanda het teen elfuur met leë hande teruggekeer na die gastehuis om te wag op Chris-hulle se terugkeer. Hulle moes teen etenstyd na Vryburg vertrek waar hulle die aand sou slaap oppad huis toe. Maar al wat uitkom is hulle! Teen half twaalf is daar 'n oproep nadat Julian gelukkig tegnologie kon inspan! Chris se bakkie het 'n pap wiel en hy kry nie die spaarwiel af nie! Met 'n klomp geleende gereedskap en GPS-koördinate het Frik en Wanda in die pad geval om die gestrandes te gaan haal – 53 km van die gastehuis af op die Noenieput-pad. Teen 2 uur was almal terug by die huis en kon Chris-hulle vertrek. Hulle het darem nog

'n Bleeksingvalk gevang voor hulle huistoe vertrek het.

Saterdag 26 Maart

Die oggend het die res van die groep gepak om na Groblershoop te vertrek – hulle volgende blyplek langs die Oranjerivier. Frik het vir oulaas om die bakkie geloop, net om te ontdek dat hy ook 'n pap wiel het. Gelukkig was Martin nog daar en sonder moeite het hy gou die pap band vervang.

Vir eers was die roofvoëls vergete! Frik se eerste prioriteit was om die pap band te laat herstel op Upington. Maar waar kry mens op 'n langnaweek 'n bandplek oop op 'n plattelandse dorp? Die eerste plek waar Frik navraag gedoen het, was die garage waar ons al 'n paar keer diesel ingegooi het, maar hulle herstel nie bande nie! Die 2de plek – Fit It – is toe, maar die "Call Out" bakkie staan voor die deur. Ja, hy kan dit herstel, maar mens moet die "Call Out Fee" van R400 betaal, plus die herstelwerk van R95. Belaglik! Die man is dan op sy eie perseel! Frik het toe maar aangery en het gelukkig 'n Supa Quick oop gekry, wat bereid was om vir R70 die band te herstel. Na 'n vinnige ontbyt sommerso langs die straat kon Frik-hulle die roofvoëltoer voortsit. Die teerpad Groblershoop het niks opgelewer nie en na 'n ligte ete by 'n garage op Groblershoop, het hulle by Kheis Riverside Lodge gaan inteken – dit is so 10 km buite die dorp.

Martin, Paula en Marie het Keimoes oorgery, maar ook niks gekry nie. Die aand het Marié haar beroemde pizza gemaak vir ete! Die

Pizza Hut kan maar gaan slaap!

Sondag 27 Maart

Martin, Paula, Marie en Frik het weer vroeg opgestaan en teen son uit was daar op drie verskillende plekke nette staangemaak al langs die rivier. Die totaal vir die oggend was net 31 voëls, maar interessante spesies soos die Gariiepglasogie met sy oranjeleer op die flanke is gering.

Die middag het almal 'n Sondagmiddag-slapie geneem en net laaggelê na 'n harde week van voëls ring. Die aand het almal ingespring en 'n lekker gekookte ete gemaak – 'n lekker verandering op die week se braai broodjies en gebraaide vleis.

Maandag 28 Maart

Vroeg opstaan was weer ons voorland! Teen 7 uur was die twee Mazda's gepak en het die pad huis toe gewink vir Martin se bakkie wat die dag 800 km moes aflê. Frik en Wanda het net tot by Vryburg gery en daar by familie oornag. Van roofvoëls ring was daar toe nie meer sprake nie.

Na middagete op Vryburg is totsiens gesê na 'n koppie koffie by Mam's Foods en toe het Martin-hulle die lang pad aangedurf huis toe, waar hulle teen sonsak veilig aangekom het – maar bietjie blinkners gesit!

Die toer was 'n reuse sukses met 240 voëls gering (51 spesies), waarvan 41 roofvoëls was. Wat 'n toer met wonderlike mense! 🐦

What is a 'feral' species?

A 'feral' species is one that is now living freely in a wild state, having either escaped or been released from captivity. It is often regarded as a kind of 'halfway house' between 'tame' and 'wild', and ceases to apply when a population has become entirely self-sustaining. So a Ring-necked Parakeet is no longer considered as feral in South Africa, whereas birds like the Red-crested Parakeet and Mandarin Duck still are, because they have yet to establish a fully wild population (and may be well on their way to doing so in Gauteng). However, the best known species in the category, the Feral Pigeon (also known as the Rock Dove), retains the title despite being a common and successful bird.

SAFRING species summary for the Crimson-breasted Shrike (Laniarius atrococcineus)

Dane Paijmans, SAFRING (safring@adu.org.za)

Being named *Laniarius*, I thought it appropriate to briefly summarise the SAFRING records related to this captivating group of birds. Of the 21 species across Africa (IOC 2016), the SAFRING database contains records of 11 species. Of these 11 species, 4 occur in southern Africa (Roberts 7); the Tropical Boubou (*L. aethiopicus*) – 304 records, Swamp Boubou (*L. bicolor*) – 110 records, Southern Boubou (*L. ferrugineus*) – 2419 records and Crimson-breasted Shrike (*L. atrococcineus*) – 1198 records.

Being that the Crimson-breasted Shrike forms *Laniarius's* logo I will focus on this species. On last analyses (June 2016) the SAFRING Database contained 1198 records (1124 initial records, 69 retraps and 5 recoveries) for the Crimson-breasted Shrike, extending across the northern parts of the Northern Cape, Gauteng, the North-West, Limpopo, Namibia, and even some records from Angola Botswana and Zimbabwe. These records date back to February 25, 1950 when the first record was reported by the Falcon College in (ring number: **50200125**), and later led to our first retrap in August 1952.

Sites hosting the most records are Kuruman River Reserve, Northern Cape with 150 records,

Wolfskruaal Farm, Limpopo with 56 records and Nokeng Buffelsdrift Conservancy in Gauteng with 31 records. Nokeng Buffelsdrift Conservancy was also the top site for retraps (10 records). The ringers contributing the most initial/ retrap records for this species are Irene van den Heuvel (a student working with the species) with 150 records, Ursula Franke-Bryson with 77 records and Dirk Heindrich with 50 records.

There are a number of other interesting SAFRING records related to this species; from our longevity record of 8y 2m 20d (recorded from 29 Apr 1993 to 16 Jul 2001; ring number: 494589) and displacement record of 227 km (recorded in Namibia; ring number: CC78210). Of the 5 recoveries recorded cause of death is unknown in all cases and no additional notes reported.

We at SAFRING really appreciate all the effort of ringers and the general public (the latter in reporting recoveries), and would like to thank everyone that has taken part in ringing and resighting in Southern Africa. If you have any unreported resightings/recoveries please contact us at SAFRING with the details. 🐦

Mandela-dag 67 minute

Karin Coetzer

Gestewel en gespoor vertrek ek Saterdag 16 Julie 2016 na Colbyn Vallei vir 'n vleiland skoonmaak. Nie 'n idee wat wag nie maar dit klink na pret en iets goed om te doen. Ons ontmoet 10:00 by die vleiland. Was die verrassing groot om soveel mense daar te sien en nog meer die hoeveelheid kinders wat kom help. Tshwane stadsraad het ons van handskoene en

sakke voorsien. Ons deel in groepe op en elke groep gaan in 'n rigting in.

Gewapen met 'n sak en groen handskoene begin ons plastieksakke, bottels en allerhande gemors optel. Vinnig-vinnig is die eerste sak vol en pak ons die tweede sak aan. Mens kon die hele dag daar spandeer om die hele area skoon te maak. Ek was verstom om te sien

wat alles daar rondlê. Van skoene, truië, kinderspeelgoed, halwe rekenaars, bottels, blikke, papiere en tot komberse. Mens kan nie help om te wonder waar alles vandaan kom nie. Dit het my net weer laat besef dat ons in 'n mors era lewe en mense nie geleer het om hulle goed op te pas nie. Daarom was dit vir my so lekker dat daar kinders ook was en dat hulle kan leer om nie net goed te laat rondlê en net papiere ens. sommer net neer te gooi.

Na ons 67 minute en stokflou, ('n lekker

moeg) het ons al ons sakke op 'n hoop gepak en 'n glasië heerlike yskoue koeldrank geniet. Verstommend oor hoeveel sakke ons gevul het in so 'n kort rukkie.

Dit was 'n heerlike en verrykende uitstap- pie saam met die "Friends of Colbyn Valley". Dankie vir die inisiatief en dat ons daarin kon deel.

'n Uitdaging aan alle klublede: Kom ons deel volgende jaar weer in die inisiatief en kyk of ons 30 lede daar kan hê.

Groete tot die volgende Mandela-dag. 🐦

Report on demonstration of ringing activities at Serene Valley, Garsfontein, Pretoria

Carol Martin, coordinator of the Friends of Serene Valley

The bird ringing in Serene Valley on Saturday, 20 August was a very successful and pleasant morning. The A ringers were Chris Siebert, outing leader, and Frik du Plooy, BLNG ringing co-ordinator, Wanda Louwrens, Marië Ueckermann, and Johan Muller and the C ringers (trainees) were Laura Jordaan and Fransie O'Brien.

They put up long mist nets along the path on the Lola Ave side of the Constantia Spruit as well as a long net along the path from the place where you can cross the Constantia Spruit to the house with the open garden.

Many of the birds which were ringed were Southern Masked Weavers, which are busily weaving their nests at the moment, but there were also some Crested Barbets, a young Southern (Common) Fiscal, a Southern Boubou, Dark-capped Bulbuls and a Cape Sparrow.

The total number of birds handled were 32 of which two were retraps. The retraps were Southern Masked Weavers which were ringed respectively by Hein Bantjies on the 1st of February 2014 and S van Stuyvenberg seven years back on the 7th of January 2009 at the Moreletakloof Nature Reserve.

Quite a few people came to have a look and all really enjoyed it and learnt quite a bit about the process. There were 16 people who came as a result of my emails and then a large group of people dressed in their Sunday best who were doing church work arrived and asked if they could have a look which of course they were welcome to do.

There were also quite a few keen photographers who took the opportunity to get close up photos of the birds. 🐦



Chris Siebert with a beautiful Southern Boubou which protested vociferously



Ringuitstappie na Marula Lodge, Groblersdal

Wanda Louwrens en Frik du Plooy

Die was 'n naweek vir ring 'lifers'! Vrydag, 29 Julie 2016 het 'n groep ringers na Marula Lodge naby Groblersdal vertrek. Die groep het bestaan uit Elba Swart (groepleier), Martin en Paula Steyn, Marié Ueckermann, Johan en Danel Muller, Johan Snyman, Wanda Louwrens, Anita, Sascha en Robert Michel en Frik du Plooy. Teen sonder was ons almal ingerig by Njala-huis, 'n ou plaashuis met slaapplek vir 12 mense. Na 'n terreininspeksie het almal 'n plek gevind om die Saterdagoggend hulle nette op te slaan. Omdat die voëls skaarser is in die winter, wou ons soveel as moontlik nette opslaan (Johan S 156 m, Frik en Wanda 120 m, Paula en Martin 128 m, Marie 60 m en Elba 72 m). Dit is gelyk aan meer as 500 meter nette.

Saterdagoggend het al die wekkers 5 uur gelui. Om in die donker op te staan is al sinoniem met die ringers. Die kopligte het in verskillende rigtings vanaf die huis beweeg en toe dit lig word, het al die nette gestaan. Party langs 'n watervoor, ander al om 'n dam en ander sommer padlangs soos ons gekom het. Getalle was nie baie groot nie, dit was maar 76 vir die naweek, maar spesiale spesies soos Swartriethaan, Langstertlaksman, Huiltinkinkie en Bruinkeelbossanger is gering. Die meeste van ons het ring 'lifers' gekry soos Frik, Johan S en Johan M met hulle Swartriethane. Johan M het nog vier ander spesies op sy lewenslys van geringde voëls gevoeg. Martin en Paula het elkeen 'n Bruinkeelbossanger vir die eerste keer gering, asook 'n Bonthoutkapper deur Martin. Marie het 'n Huiltinkinkie gekry.

Saterdag laatmiddag moes al die nette weer afgeslaan word, want die Sondag het ons by die Lodge self gaan ring. Die groot trekpleister daar was nie net die mooi tuine nie, maar ook die slaapplek van honderde Rooikeelbyvreters in 'n grondval daar naby. Elba en Martin het so sag as moontlik in die donker te werk gegaan om nie die voëls voortydig te laat vlieg nie. Hulle het die hele

“roost” toegespan en met eerste lig het 30 van die voëls in die nette beland, asook twee Oewerswaels, wat vir Sacha en Elba ring 'lifers' was. Vir Wanda was die Rooikeelbyvreter 'n nuwe een op haar lys. Ander mooi spesies was Sascha se Waaierstertvlieëvanger en Martin se Maricosuikerbekkie—nuwe spesies op hulle lewenslyste.

Van die 30 Rooikeelbyvreters was drie 'retraps', wat Elba in Junie 2014 op dieselfde plek gering het, toe sy en haar man, Jan, Marula Lodge die eerste keer besoek het op 'n jaguitstappie.

Na middagete het die groep tevrede huiswaarts gekeer. 🐦



Frik du Plooy met 'n Swartriethaan

Squatting down under in Western Australia

Edna Murphy

We wake up to the dawn chorus. In W.A. they wake up when the sparrow farts. Could this be the difference in having Dutch ancestors here, and British convicts there?

The trip was based in and around Perth, with initially a day trip south to Fremantle.

A very well informed guide took us through the prison explaining that as each ship landed with British convicts the new arrivals were stripped totally naked and searched for any weapons prior to being issued with their new clothes. Each convict was locked into a tiny cell from which they were released in order to mine the limestone, to expand the size of the prison. The prison housed convicts for as minor a felony as stealing a sheep or even murder.

No wonder the only birds outside the prison were the raucous Australian Ravens which had very white eyes which on reflection of the blue sky took on an icy blue hue. These were scavengers of note which no doubt had been fed convict carcasses from the gallows of the prison.

A day trip to the Perth Zoo is not to be missed. No birds visible here excepting for the Black Swan after which the Swan River in central Perth is named, together with the Australian Pelican seen swimming on a spotlessly clean dam. Not to forget seeing the endangered flightless Southern Cassowary up close and noting that he is a miracle male that not only incubates the eggs but raises the young too.

Of great interest is to take a guided tour through The African Adventure Section to see and hear how the animals are treated. Several are rescue animals which are 'entertained' to avoid boredom in their restricted confines. The breeding programme, which is strictly controlled to world standards, is rigorously monitored with regard to where any mammal is sourced as well as to where any offspring may be relocated. Our Suricates (or Meerkats) are living in luxury with the eternal family guard standing tall and curious to warn the group of any danger.

A day trip north to the Pinnacles Desert near Cervantes together with friends that flew in from Sydney, resulted in a wonderful gift from Ian who was totally sick of me asking: "What bird is that?" The gift of *The Simpson and Day Field Guide* was most appreciated and is most useful Down Under.

Few birds proliferate the desert region. Australasian (Richard's) Pipit was spotted together with a solitary Crested Pigeon and several Galah, grey and pink cockatoos. The curio shop was home to a Welcome Swallow at the nest.

The extraordinary pinnacles are the result of high winds that initially created compressed sand dunes which are latterly being swept away leaving the hardest core of the dune as a 'pinnacle'. Nearby Cervantes is home to another extraordinary sight – stromatolites. These have developed on rocks in a saline pan from

Which birds are the least capable of walking?

Swifts and hummingbirds, whose legs and feet are very small, are pretty much helpless on the ground. In fact most swifts can do no more than cling to vertical surfaces with their forward-pointing toes (the name of their order, Apodiformes, means 'lacking feet'). Also, divers and grebes have legs set so far back on their body that they find it very difficult to propel themselves while on land. For swifts and hummingbirds the inability to walk is a trade-off for an essentially aerial existence; for divers and grebes it is a trade-off for an aquatic one.

cynobacteria, a single nucleus organism that is one of the earliest producers of oxygen to enable life on our planet. A Double-banded Plover roamed the shoreline. My personal highlight of the day was seeing a real live kangaroo in the wild and not on a menu in Perth.

A day trip South to Mundurah for a boat trip around the canals yielded flocks of cormorants, seagulls and the majestic pelican overhead.

The canals are home to some of the most affluent citizens of W.A., each with huge homes with a private jetty. Most amusing is see how each homeowner tries to keep the seagulls from messing on their very expensive jet-ties and boats. Short of a scarecrow various manmade bird scarecrows are attached to the upright poles.

Perth is a city that encompasses many free-entry green areas where people can exercise, meet at free public gas-only barbeques for picnics, allowing the children and the birds to live in happy companionship.

It took the Zulu from Africa to bring Perth the best rains of the season including a heavy duty storm which resulted in the Swan River having a five metre tide rise and some river-bank washaways.

We took a walk along the river and into

a Kangaroo sanctuary in Perth which was partially flooded due to the storm. Not a single marsupial to be seen but interesting birds instead; Pacific Black Duck, Hardhead (White-eyed Duck), Australian Wood (Maned) Duck, Eurasian Coot, White-necked (Pacific) Heron, White-faced Heron, Australian White Ibis, and Black-faced Cuckoo-shrike were all enjoying the watery environment and the proliferation of insects following the rains. 'Willie Wagtail' is most friendly and abundant.

Inner Perth itself yielded sightings of the Red Wattlebird, New Holland Honeyeater, Australian Magpie and White-backed Swallow, together with amazing squadrons of pelicans overhead whilst listening to the call of the numerous ravens. It took an overnight stay in Wannaroo to see the antics of the Laughing Kookaburra and to find our Laughing Dove, cooing in the garden.

There is little doubt that we beat the Ozzies with our LBJs, but they win the category of 'hard-billed' birds; Cockatoos, Parrots et-al which can lead to a lifetime of twitching passion to see them all.

At a conversion rate of around 10 to 1, a sirloin steak being R400, I would like to thank my son for allowing me to squat in his accommodation for my memorable trip Down Under. 🐣



Rondomtalierit in Mei/Junie 2016

Salomi Louw

In Mei 2016 moes ek in Weskus Nasionale Park/Langebaan wees vir SANParke ereveldwagters se Algemene Jaarvergadering/Indaba/kursusse. Dis vreeslik ver om te ry vir 'n week se gebeure, dus is dit die moeite werd om die reis te verleng en ander plekke in so 'n tog in te sluit. Omdat afstande so groot is, moet jy ook rustig ry en, natuurlik, langs die pad voëls kyk. Die getroue en beduimelde *Southern African Bridfinder** is natuurlik my pad- en voëlkykgids.

Dag 1: 'Red Sands' net wes van Kuruman is altyd 'n lekker oornagplek met Rooioogtiptol, Grootrooivalk, Bleekvlerkspreeu, Feëvlieë-vanger, Namakwasuikerbekkie en Piritbosbontrokkie tussen al die ander voëls deur. Maar die sneeuwind uit die Noordpool waai verwoed en veel meer as genoemde voëls is nie te sien nie; ook staproetes is uitgesluit weens die koue en rooi stofwalms. Getrou skryf ek egter elke spesie op wat ek identifiseer – soos ook vir die volgende klompie dae.

Dag 2: Die plan was om in 'Oranjerus' naby Kanoneiland te oornag, maar daar was niemand by ontvangs nie. Dis nog vroeg en ek ry rond. Uiteindelik bevind ek my laatmiddag by 'Die Eiland' in Upington. Vermoed dié kampeerplek ten alle koste: vuil, verniel en verwaarloos. Sien darem 'n Bontvisvanger, Karoospekvreter, Bonthoutkapper, Waterdikkop, Kalahariwipstert en Namakwaduif om by my lys te voeg.

Dag 3: Vanaf Keimoes oor Kenhardt ry ek vir meer as 100 km in 'n mistonnel sodat jy beswaarlik 50 meter voor jou kan sien. Dit word 'n lang, stadige tog. Gelukkig klaar die mis voor Brandvlei op. Met 'n vorige uittog het ek spesiaal Pella toe gery om die Rooilewerik – sonder sukses – te soek. Die 'Birdfinder' sê dat die Rooilewerik ook te vinde is op die Granaatboskolkpad ± 2 km noord van Brandvlei en dan moet jy na 2 km op die uitkyk wees vir

dié voël. Ek het eger pas op dié roete afgedraai of 'n kontante voël kom land skuins voor my en huppelspring onder die bossies in: Rooilewerik! Hy is egter so vinnig onder die karoobossies in en uit dat dit moeilik is om 'n foto te neem, maar ek het darem een herkenbare as bewys!

Selfs al kyk die dorpsbewoners my vreemd aan, ry ek oos van Brandvlei na die Sakrivieromgewing en kry nog voëls vir my ritly, soos die Swartoorlewerik, Rooioorlangstertjie en Namakwalewerik – my ritly groei aan. Bo my sweef 'n Witkruisarend met 'n Witborskraai wat hom dan op die stert, dan op die rug of vlerk aanpik, maar die arend ignoreer die aanvaller en hou aan met sy swenkelende draaie.

By die oostelike ingang van Calvinia is 'n oornagplek, 'Klein Plasia', letterlik op die rand van die dorp en met 'n veld en skraapdamme oorkant die pad waar ook 'n verskeidenheid voëls gesien kan word. Die grootste gedeelte van die res van my dag hier het ek egter gewy – soos aanbeveel deur *Birdfinder* – aan 'n besoek aan Akkerendam Natuurreservaat. Na die onlangse reën was die paaie egter so onbegaanbaar dat ek nie veilig gevoel het om dit ver met my VW Transporter aan te pak nie. Indien ek sou vasval, was die kans op hulp



Salomi Louw

Rooireier/Purple Heron



Swarthkoppeier/ Black-headed Heron

en redding naby aan nul. Talle nuwe voëls vir my ritlys is wel hierdie dag aangeteken, soos Grysruglewerik, Gristjeriktik, Grysborstjagra, Grootlangtoon, Versamelvoël, Geelkanarie en Vaalstreepkoppie.

Dag 4 reis ek vanaf Calvinia na Tankwa Karoo Nasionale Park op slipglibberige en wateroorstroomde paaie (of daar verby deur die veld) en oor/deur botterboom-oorgroeide bergpasse om vir 3 nagte in Tankwa se Perdekloof te gaan kampeer waar elke eenheid beskik oor 'n stort-/badkamer, toilet en 'n kombuisdeel – met sonkragwarmstelsel (as die son skyn!) en minus elektrisiteit. Vir vier dae beproef ek die paaie waarvoor 'n voertuig met hoë grondvrye hoogte en meestal 4x4 nodig is (maar ek en my VW hanteer die uitdagings terwyl ons ook voëls kyk): Breëkoparend; Bleeksingvalk; Witvlrkkorhaan; Kopereend; Kaapse Fisant; Karoolewerik; Sekretarisvoël; Kelkiewyn; Rooiwang- en Witkruismuisvoël; Rooikoplewerik; Kaapse Klappertjie; Vlaktespekvreter; Karoospekvreter; Bokmakierie, Karoolangstertjie; Witgatspreeu; Bleekvlerspreeu; Kleinrooiband-suikerbekkie; Kaapse Wewer en Geel- en Witkeelkanarie. In die mis en reën pak ek ook die (angswekende) Gannapas aan waar die pad nie net glibberig is nie, maar ook op 'n stadium bestaan uit twee opgeboude spore van los

leiklippe – draai links of regs uit die spore en jygly die afgrond in! Bo-op Gannapas is alles in mis en reën gehul en die pad onhanteerbaar glyerig, maar Withalskraaie ry op die rûe van skape; Kopereende en Wildemakou plas in die modderdamme. By Middelpas aangekom sê die pompjoggie die beste pad na Tankwa is terug oor dié (uitmergelende) Gannapas – waarvoor ek nie kans sien in die mis en reën nie. Die pad na Sutherland, sê hy, is baie sleg en ek moet liewers met die Gannapas terruggaan. Ek trek egter kleinkoppie: om in die mis en reën met dié pas af te gaan na Tankwa Karoo NP is meer as wat ek van myself (en my voertuig) kan verwag. Ek ry dus voort na Sutherland – en sowaar, seker die slegste pad wat ek in my lewe gery het, want hulle werk daaraan: een kant is totaal geslote; die ander bestaan uit sowat 1½ meter hoë opvullings met klippe/rotse/grond waaroor jy stadig en versigtig tussen skopgrawe en stootskrapers deur moet ry (ten minste werk hulle aan die paaie!). Oor Boen Onderwaterdrif is ek uiteindelik terug by my kampeerplek in Perdekloof; het darem tydens dié roete Bokmakierie, Karoolewerik, Koper-, Swart- en Teeleend en Wildemakou aangeteken asook Kelkiewyn, Karoospekvreter, Bergkanarie en Jangroentjie.

Die Kaapse fisant skrop nes in die kampeerterrein en die Geel-, Berg- en Swartkopkanarie hou hulle nie skaars nie. Tankwa Karoo roem hulle op die teenwoordigheid van die Bloukopdrawwer, maar dié het nie te siene gekry nie (dit wel al in Namibië op my lewenslys kon aanteken), terwyl die Kleinrooiband-suikerbekkie die wêreld vol is. My reislys raak voller.

Dae hoeveel later: In Langebaan (Leentjiesklipkampering) by Weskus Nasionale Park vir 'n week. Die Hartlaubmeeeie is 'n verpesting. Swarttobies en Grootswartrugmeeeie is al die rotse vol. Bank- en Trekduikers doen gereelde verblyvlugte; die Witpelikane vorm V-vlugte teen die hemelruim terwyl Bergpatrys in die onderbos rondploeter; Reuse Sterretjie saam met Swarttobies, Kleinwulp, Kleinflamink, Geelbeksterretjie, Witkruisvleivalk,

Vaal- en Geelborsstrandkiewiet en Grasvoël vul die uitkykruimte. In die kampeerterrein by Leentjiesklip is 'n gesin Dikkoppe heeltemal tuis tussen die kampeerdere. My ritlys groei aan.

Nou word daar ook nie meer getrou elke enkele spesie aangeteken nie; net die nuwes vir hierdie rit.

Hier naby, in Langebaanweg, besoek ek die 'West Coast Fossil Park': wat 'n belewenis! Menseskedels van sowat 200 000 jaar oud; 'n Afrikabeer amper die grootte van 'n volwasse man; kortnek kameelperd; sabeltandtier en 4-tand olifant wat in dié omgewing floreer het se fossiele is hier vasgevang in sand/modder. Dit was destyds 'n tropiese woud!

'n Praatjie deur Pamela van 'Pelican Watch' is interessant. Sy vertel onder andere hoe die pelikane die eiers en kuikens van Malgasse vreet: daarom word daar tydens broeiseisoen mense gebruik om die voëls op Malgaseiland op te pas en te beskerm.

Twee weke nadat ek uit Pretoria weg is, vertrek ek uit Langebaan om nog Nasionale Parke in te pas. Eers volg Agulhas – met darem enkele bloukraanvoëls, dan Bontebok en Sedgeveld/Wildernis (Tuinroete NP) vir 'n week. Die Bosjakkalsvoël is tuis hier in die plantasies en op 'n bootrit op die Touwriewier kry ons 'n reier wat nie tuishoort in een van die kategorieë nie. Nadat dié foto op Facebook verskyn het, is die besluit dat dit 'n kruising tussen 'n Blou- en 'n Rooireier is. Ons het wel heelwat Rooireiers tydens die vaart gesien. By die vleie is 'n verskeidenheid waad-, water- en ander voëls te sien, met Waterdikkoppe wat op die grasperk langs die water met jongelinge rondraf. Vier verskillende visvangerspesies sit sommer naby mekaar; die Grootkoningriethaan met sy lang, rooi tone vermaak my wanneer hy die riete onder die wateroppervlak afbreek, die omhulsel stroop en dan die murg vreet. Swartbandlangstertjie, Goudgeelvink, Olyflyster, Bruinjakkalsvoël en Gewone Willie, Witkoljanfrederik en Knysnaloerie kan gesien word op die talle staproetes in hierdie omgewing.

Na Wildernis staan ek 2 nagte in Tsitsikamma, maar kan nie staptogte onderneem nie



Salomi Lowy

Swaarteend/ African Black Duck

weens 'n voetbesering. Van hier af is ek aangewese op voëls kyk uit die voertuig uit. Oral waar ek kom – Noord-, Wes-, Suid- en Oos-Kaap is daar swerms en troppe en troppe en swerms tarentale – derduisende van die kekkelende, ronddrawwende spikkelvoëls. Nog nooit voorheen het ek op een enkele dag so baie gesien soos met dié rit nie!

Die tyd begin kalwe aan my vierde week weg. Camdeboo NP is volgende op my lys. Twee keer hier kry ek Sekretarisvoëls wat wegvlug, maar telkens weer voor my op die pad beland. Die Karoolangbeklewerik word ook hier aangeteken. Op 3 Junie, nou in Bergkwagga Nasionale Park, kry ek die Klipkoester, Baardmannetjie en Gysrugtinktinkie.; die volgende dag die Kaneelborsanger sommer langs die kampeerterrein. Laasgenoemde het ek nog net een keer vantevore ongesoek en onverwags in Namibië gesien.

My uit-en-tuis het net meer as 4 weke geduur, sowat 7 700 km se reis behels en my deur asemrowend mooie landskappe gemeem: ons woon in 'n suidelike wonderwêreld!

Die voëltelling gedurende hierdie (vroee) wintertyd was 186. Heel skaflik, dink ek.

*Cohen, Callan; Spottiswoode, Claire; Rossouw, Jonathan. 2006. *Southern African Birdfinder: Where to find 1 400 bird species in southern Africa and Madagascar*. Cape Town: Struik Publishers.

Devon birding

Neithard Graf von Dürckheim

When the BLNG group that had visited Devon posted some interesting sightings and reports on Facebook, it raised my interest (and my heartbeat-rate) when I saw and read, what they had spotted.

Hmm, where is Devon? Heard of it long ago as a farming area. But birding? I read up about it in the useful *The Chamberlain Guide to Birding Gauteng*, 2008. Marais, E., Peacock, F. Yes indeed, a Highveld birding destination. The leader of the BLNG group had given me some useful hints in a telephone call. My wife Kathrin could not join in, she had another planned activity, but she kindly offered to prepare my lunch sandwiches.

The next day Wednesday 18th May, I departed as it was still dark. I wanted to be on site for the “dawn-chorus” to stand a better chance to see the “specials”. Driving in the direction of Delmas, the traffic increased and so did the fog and the visibility decreased to less than 20 metres and I followed a string of vehicles, all with emergency flicker lights on. We crawled through Delmas, with heavy trucks just everywhere, there must have been more than 100. The roads in town were heavily potholed. Some of them really large and deep. Eish! I was glad to leave this “truck-metropolis” and drive in the direction of Leandra, from where the road to Devon turns off. I passed through Devon, a quaint little village with old buildings, crossed the N17 highway and turned off onto the gravel roads.

Not far from the turn-off the narrow gravel road, it looked more like a farm track, I crossed a small stream, which turned out to be the Blesbokspruit. Around the large water-bodies a variety of birds were to be seen: Blacksmith Lapwings were calling, large flocks of Red-billed Quelea flew their fighter-jet formations, Southern Red Bishops all in non-breeding plumage, African Stonechat and on the

telephone wires a Black-shouldered Kite. In the grassveld I spotted and heard Northern Black Korhaan calling. Then I heard the characteristic “doctor-raad, doctor-raad” call of the Blue Korhaan, and three of these magnificent birds flew overhead and landed some 100 metres away in the vlei. Wow, what a good beginning! Egyptian Geese called loudly from the waters edge, Reed Cormorant hunting for their fishy prey and Swainson’s Spurfowl called loudly into the early morning. I could not but marvel at these wonderful bird calls in the cold of the early morning. Then I heard my first target bird calling: “yellow-kierrie, yellow-kierrie”, some five coveys of Orange River Francolin were calling in the dense grass. I scanned the area, saw some movement but it was too far. The spotting scope was mounted with shaking hands, as I needed this bird! Then mother luck smiled at me and I saw a covey of three Orange River Francolin calling and feeding, although quite far away. Thanks for spotting scopes! They continued to entertain me with their calls for probably 20 minutes, but I could not get a better sighting. I left, reluctantly though, as the atmosphere was just so pleasing.

Driving on a spotted Orange-throated Longclaw in good numbers, calling and running in the road, Chestnut-backed Sparrowlarks, Cape Sparrows in really large swarms (I cannot remember ever seeing such large swarms), Southern (Common) Fiscal, with Cape Turtle Doves also in good numbers everywhere. The area South of Devon which I birded had very little crop farming, and the lands I saw looked as if they had been devastated by the drought. The grassveld though looked in surprisingly good condition and there were large cattle herds all over. Obviously cattle ranching country, with hundreds and hundreds of beef cattle per herd. The vastness of the grassveld and the grazing cattle filled me with peace

and contentment and added to the special atmosphere of the early morning, no noises no vehicles no sirens, just the quiet of a country morning. Pure bliss!

On I drove, crisscrossing many of the gravel roads south of Devon. In a large dam, many waterbirds were spotted: Yellow-billed Duck, Little Grebe, Red-knobbed Coot, Red-billed Teal, and surprisingly Greater Flamingo, and many others. Turning back, I saw a chat next to the road – what was that? After detailed inspection it turned out to be a Sickle-winged Chat! What a super-sighting! On it went, around some large farmyards with Eucalyptus trees next to the road, where there were numerous pigeons and doves, weavers, Green Wood-hoopoe, White-browed Sparrow-Weavers close to their nests in trees, Hadeda Ibis in a vlei. Further on in the grasslands I spotted Pink-billed Lark. At noon, I decided to return to the low-water bridge over the Blesbokspruit. I put up my camping chair and got out my lunch, poured myself some coffee and waited. Hamerkop were active at water's edge, as well as Great White Egret, African Pipit in the grassveld nearby. But what interested me most, were the calls of many African Quailfinches flying overhead, to-and-fro but all

I could see were little dark birds emitting the Quailfinch call. I had to get a better sighting! Out came the spotting scope and I scanned the area. No trace of Quailfinch. I got out three different bird books and read up about their habits. The message I got was: they are more often heard than seen, they are very secretive, and they drink often. OK. So I scanned water's edge. Nothing. Scanning with binoculars at water's edge, this time very close to overhanging grasses and vegetation, there they were! I first thought I had spotted a Golden-breasted Bunting (!), but then through the spotting scope, I noticed my mistake: only the lower belly was the orange colour, in addition to this it had streaking on the breast and flanks, a reddish bill and a facial mask, different to the streaking on the head of the bunting. This was a super lunchtime sighting. The grassveld also yielded Desert and Zitting Cisticola.

In all, I saw about 50 species of birds, including some red-hot specials! I will be back to Devon.

PS: on returning via the narrow gravel road, I saw two birds in the road, I stopped the car, lifted the binoculars and there they were again: out in the open, two Orange River Francolin! 🦋

Tanzanië toer Mei 2016

Pieter en Joëlna Heslinga

Dit was nog altyd ons droom om na die indrukwekkende wildebeeste-migrasie in die Serengeti, Tanzanië te gaan kyk. Ongeveer 'n jaar gelede kom ons af op 'n invlieg-toer wat deur Seagull Toere van Jeffreysbaai gereël word en wat spesifiek op die migrasie gemik is. Ons praat met ons swaer en sus Johan en Annanien Pretorius en gou besluit ons dis net die ding vir 2016. Ek maak kontak met die eienaar Linde van Niekerk en sy reserweer vir ons 'n toerdatum 22 tot 28 Mei 2016 en laat ons toe om ons eie groep op te maak. Sonder baie moeite was ons geselskap vol, 17 van ons

met Linde die 18de persoon.

Dit het soos 'n ewigheid gevoel vir die toer om aan te breek. Ons pak in – die belangrikste ons kameras, verkykers, 'n sakgrootte voëlboek oor die voëls van Oos Afrika, ons klere vir koue en warm dae, 'n botteltjie whisky en 'n boksie wyn. Op 22 Mei 2016 vertrek ons per vliegtuig vanaf Johannesburg na Dar es Salaam in Tanzanië en vlieg direk daarna met 2 kleiner vliegtuie Arusha toe. Daarvandaan ry ons met 3 wildbesigtigingsvoertuie na ons hotel toe, die Lake Manyara Serena Hotel. Dit was aand toe ons daar aankom en min het ons geweet



Superb Starling



Red & Yellow Barbets



Black Coucal

watter pragtige uitsig oor die Manyrameer die volgende oggend op ons sou wag.

Dis dag 2 en na 'n lekker ontbyt, vertrek ons met ons trokkies na die Manyara Nasionale Park en verken die meer en sy omgewing tot kort voor middag. Ons sien pragtige diere en

kom gou agter dat Tanzanië ook 'n voëlparadys is, met die Manyara Nasionale Park wat self meer as 400 spesies voëls op hulle lys het. Ons raak gaande oor die mooiste Spreeu, 'n **Superb Starling**, wat ons later agterkom eintlik maar so volop as ons Kleinglansspreeu in Suid-Afrika is. Ons sien gou 'n ander soort Neushoringvoël wat ons nie ken nie, 'n Silvery-cheeked Hornbill, en 'n pragtige Rooipensreier maar word aangepropt dat daar nie baie tyd vir voëlskyk sal wees nie en dat ons moet aanskuif. Ons vertrek en ry in reënweer die kraterberg uit, tot bo waar ons stop en uitklim om oor die Ngorongorokrater te kan uitkyk. Dit was pragtig om na die kratervlakke van hoog bo uit te kyk. Ons neem 'n groepphoto en ry verder deur die Ngorongoro Bewaringsgebied na die Serengeti vlaktes. Ons betree die Serengeti Nasionale Park by die Naabi Koppie Ingangshek en sou die aand by die Serengeti Serena Lodge naby Seronera slaap. Ons is moeg, eet gou en gaan slaap, want môre is die groot dag. Die hele nag deur hoor ons die gebulk van wildebeeste en ons kan nie wag om hulle môre te sien nie.

Dis dag 3. Ons geniet ontbyt en vertrek op ons eerste wildbesigtigingsrit. Sommige van ons besluit om 'n lugballonuitstappte te doen en sluit later die oggend by die res van ons groep aan. Wat was dit 'n belewenis om tussen letterlik derduisende wildebeeste, gaselle, sebras, olifante, kameelperde en ander diere deur te beweeg. Kilometers aaneen. Om nie te praat van al die leeus, hiënas, luiperds en jagluiperds wat ons gesien het nie.

Sommer gou-gou sien ons ook pragtige voëls, soveel lifers vir ons Afrikalys. Ander soorte houtkappers, neushoringvoëls, kwêvoëls, buffelwewers, wewers, byvreters, laksmanne, sysies, suikerbekkies, ens. Daar is nie Afrikaanse name nie, dis Red & Yellow Barbets, Von der Decken's Hornbills, Bare-faced en White-bellied Go-away-birds, White-headed Buffalo-weavers, Rufous-tailed Weavers, Cinnamon-chested Bee-eaters, Grey-backed Fiscals, Red-cheeked Cordon-bleus (Waxbills), Golden-winged and Tacazze Sunbirds. Ons sien Spur-wingend Lapwings, Fisher's Love-birds, pragtige Silverbirds, Hildebrand's



Pieter Hestlinga

Group photo on top of Ngorogoro crater

Starlings, Baglafecht Weavers, 'n Brown-backed Woodpecker, die pragtige Usambiro Barbet, die mooiste Blackfaced en Chestnut-bellied Sandgrouses, Abyssinian Swartbekkelaars/ Scimitarbill, en nog vele meer. En amper vergeet ek van die Swartvleiloeries/Black Coucals. Pragtig! In totaal 41 lifiers, voëls wat nie in ons Suider-Afrika voëlboeke is nie. Om nie te praat oor die groot verskeidenheid roofvoëls nie – mooi Eastern Chanting Goshawks, Roofarende, Breëkoparende, Kroonarende, pragtige Swartborsslangarende, Witborsjakkalsvoëls, Ruppellse Aasvoëls, Swartaasvoëls en nog ander. Om nie te praat van die statige Sekretarisvoëls, Gompoue en Mahems nie. Ook 2 pragtige Swartvleiloeries. Ons het 'n lys gemaak van die voëls wat ons geïdentifiseer het en kan dit beskikbaar stel aan enige iemand wat daarin belang sou stel. Ons kom die aand laat by die lodge terug, moeg maar aangedaan deur die wonderlike ervaring wat ons die dag beleef het. Ons eet lekker, drink Serengeti bier en gaan slaap

Dag 4 het dieselfde as die vorige dag verloop. Ons het egter ander paaie gery, ander diere en ander voëls gesien. Vir die eerste keer sien ons Spoorvlerkkiewiete/Spur-winged Lapwings. Ongelooflik! Vandag bietjie vroeër terug by die lodge wat vir ons geleentheid gee om bietjie te ontspan, nog 'n Serengeti bier

weg te slaan en deur die perseel rond te dwaal en voëltjies te kyk. Ons eet weer baie lekker en gaan vroeg slaap.

Dag 5 vertrek ons na ontbyt en ry terug na die Ngorogoro Bewaringsgebied maar ons draai af na die Ndtumeer. Nog voor ons inboek doen ons eers 'n wildbesigtigingsrit om 'n gedeelte van die meer. Ons sien 'n pragtige Swartborsslangarende, Breëkoparende en baie Groot- en Kleinflaminke. Ons was selfs gelukkig om af te kom op 'n jagluiperd en 2 opgeskote kleintjies wat op jag was en het amper 'n vangs gesien. Sterk skemer kom ons by ons lodge aan, die Ndtu Lodge en Tented Camp. Die aand word ons bederf in 'n baie lekker lapa, groot vure en baie lekker kos. Ons kuier tot laat met Linde en ons vriende want ons toer is besig om uit te loop

Dag 6. Ons vertrek vroeg op 'n uitgebreide wildbesigtigingsrit om die Ndtumeer. Tydens 'n koffiestop digby die meer sien ons pragtige sandpatryse, die Chestnut-bellied Sandgrouses. Ongeveer 10 uur is ons terug lodge toe. Die omgewing het baie wild en baie voëls, 'n plek om na terug te kom. Ons geniet 'n baie lekker ontbyt en maak gereed om te vertrek. By die ontvangsgebou is daar 'n waterbakkie wat vir die voëltjies uitgesit word en ons sien die pragtigste Blue-capped Cordon-bleus (soort Blousysies) in groot getalle. Ook kanaries,



Chestnut-bellied Sandgrouses

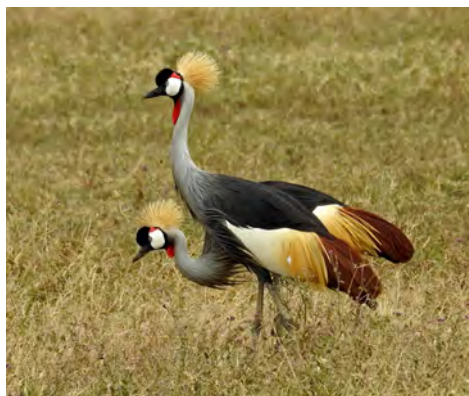
suikerbekkies en ander sisyies.

Ons besoek die kraal van die Masai mense wat daar woon en 'n gids vertel ons van hulle gewoontes, hulle kultuur, hulle leefstyle en ons besoek selfs 'n kleuterskoolklasie waar die kleintjies vir ons somme opsê. Hulle het baie handgemaakte arm- en nekbandjies, en ons kon nie vertrek voor ons nie almal daarvan gekoop het nie. Ons sou die aand slaap by die Ngorongoro Serena Lodge. Daar aangekom kon ons ontspan met 'n Ngorongoro bier of op 'n staproete saam met 'n gids gaan om voëltjies te kyk. Dit was 'n wenkeuse, want ons sien nog lifers. Die mooiste Dusky Turtle Doves, Tacazze en Golden-wingend Sunbirds en Streaky Seadeaters. Ons kry weer 'n baie lekker aandete, dit is koud hier en ons gaan gou bed toe.

Dag 7 is vir ons 'n groot dag want ons gaan die Ngorongoro Krater besoek. Ons het donker die oggend vertrek want Linde wou dat ons op die kratervloer is voor die son opkom. Deur die aand en nag trek daar gereeld 'n digte misbank oor wat die krater bedek. Dan later in die oggend wanneer die son uit is en deur die miswolke breek beleef mens die ongelooflikste uitsigte. Ons is weer in ons wildbesigtigingsvoertuie en met 'n baie steil eenrigtinggrondpaadjie daal ons ongeveer 600 m af in die krater tot ons op die kratervloer kom. Die krater het dwarsdeur die jaar kos en water en is dus 'n ideale habitat vir 'n groot verskeidenheid diere en voëls. Ook baie leeu's, luiperds, hiënas en



Blue-capped Cordon-blues



Mahems

'n aantal swartrenosters. Ons sien van alles. Onder in die krater lê die Magadimeer met baie Groot- en Kleinflaminkes en pragtige Mahems. Ons spandeer die hele oggend in die krater, ry rondom die meer, allerhande paadjies, en hou piekniek by die Ngoitokitok Dam. Daarna ry ons deur die Leraiwoud en met 'n steil geplaveide paadjie ry ons weer die berg (die kraterwand) uit terug na die Serena Manyara Lodge toe waar ons middagete geniet. Hiervandaan terug Arusha toe, maar nie voor ons by 'n groot kuriewinkel in die dorpie Mto Wa Mbu stop nie. Ons koop 'n Masia kombers en ander aandenkings. Hiervandaan terug Arusha toe. Ons slaap by die

Arusha Coffee Lodge met sy groot koffieboomplantasies. Die aand kuier ons vir oulaas lekker.

Dag 8 is in een opsig 'n hartseer dag want ons vakansietjie is verby en ons moet terug huis toe. Aan die ander kant borrel ons van genoegdoening oor 'n ervaring van 'n leeftyd. Ons geniet 'n baie lekker ontbyt en vertrek later met die trokkies lughawe toe. Daarvandaan weer met die klein vliegtuigies Dar es Salaam toe en later die middag terug Johannesburg Lughawe toe. Gou weer 'n groeefoto geneem. Al die doeanepunte en lughaweprosedures verloop seepglad, Linde het gesorg! En voor ons ons kon kry land ons in Johannesburg en die droom is verby.

Nou was ons ook Serengeti toe en kan ons ook saampraat oor die ongelooflike natuur- en dierelewe. Ons het die Groot 5 byna elke dag

gesien. Om nie te praat van die voëllewe nie. Wat nie beplan was as 'n voëlkyktoer nie het 166 verskillende spesies voëls opgelewer (en 41 lifers) en as ons meer kon stop dalkies nog baie meer. Ons besluit ook net daar dat die Serengeti ons nie vir die laaste keer gesien het nie en as ons weer kom dan kom ons om voëls te kyk. Ek kon ook nie anders as om vir my 'n dik boek oor *Birds of East Africa* te koop nie, 'n hele 50 USD, maar elke sent werd.

Ons se graag baie dankie aan al ons familie en vriende wat saamgegaan het en ook aan Linde van Niekerk, eienaar van Seagull Toere, nie net vir die uitstekende reëlings nie maar ook dat sy as ons toerleier opgetree het. Linde jy was great en ons ry weer saam! Ek gee graag meer inligting oor ons toer vir mense wat sou belangstel om ook so-iets te doen. 🐦

A Leaflove story

Don Reid

I hardly consider myself to fall into the category of fanatical twitchers, those hardy, super-keen birders, who let nothing stand in the way of their seeing rare birds that turn up in Southern Africa from time to time.

Such was the case when the reports started coming through, in mid-February 2016, of a pair of Yellow-throated Leafloves nesting at Caprivi Houseboat Safari Lodge near Katima Mulilo in Namibia, some 200 kms south of their normal distribution. In no time this unexpected pair of birds caused a mini gold-rush like invasion of keen twitchers, heading to this remote part of Southern Africa via plane and car from all over South Africa and Namibia. Suddenly, the Southern African region had a brand new bird added to the regional list!

To twitch or not?

I watched with interest as the messages kept coming through from Trevor Hardaker and the SA Rare Bird Facebook page, knowing that I would be going to Kasane in northern

Botswana for a project I am involved in, during the first week in March. I also had a look at the map and realised that the lodge where the Leafloves had taken up residence fell nicely within my arbitrary "twitch limit" of around 2 hours' drive, being about 120 kms from Kasane, with a border crossing from Botswana to Namibia to negotiate along the way. So, if the Leafloves hung around until then, I planned to "pop over" the border for a quick visit and hopefully a new tick on my life list for Southern Africa.

Tuesday 1st March

Come Tuesday, I caught the daily 11:50 am flight from Joburg to Kasane – a day early for my site visit so that I could spend a night at the lodge and be back in time for the project commitments the following day. I had arranged for a bakkie to be available and shortly after landing I set off for Katima Mulilo via the Ngoma border post.

From Kasane to Ngoma the public road



Schalow's Turaco



View over river



Yellow-throated Leaflove



Yellow-throated Leaflove -Site of nest

(tarred) bisects the northernmost section of Chobe Game Reserve and the landscape is pristine woodland all the way. The border formalities went smoothly, perhaps because I was the only customer in an hour or two. Once into the Caprivi in Namibia, the scenery changed to more open, patchy woodland, interspersed with small settlements and small-scale agriculture. I arrived at the lodge by 4:30 pm and settled into the rustic accommodation on the river in unit No 5, which turned out to be directly alongside the tree where the Leafloves were nesting.

I immediately saw one of the young chicks peering over the edge of the nest and within minutes the parents were in the vicinity and at the nest, bringing morsels and calling in a Babbler-like manner, although less harsh. The rest of the afternoon was spent re-visiting the nest site in the hope of getting better views/photos and exploring the small property with

its jungle-like gardens and river views.

It proved to be really challenging trying to get the Leafloves in my camera's viewfinder for long enough to get a decent photo, as they seemed intent on hiding in the shadiest part of the foliage at every opportunity and when they did show themselves briefly, it was in an opening high up in the trees with bright light behind them.

Other birders, including André Marx, had arrived earlier and a few more arrived after me. We enjoyed a good evening meal together and then made our way to mosquito-netted beds in the rustic cabins, happy to be able to add the Leaflove to our life lists and looking forward to some further exciting birding the next morning.

Wednesday 2nd March

When I got to the coffee and rusks table in the morning, I found the rest of the

small group of twitchers already there and I was happy to hear they were about to set off for a birding walk along the dirt road outside the lodge. André's expertise proved invaluable and we added species at a steady pace as we proceeded slowly down the road, which turned out to be quite busy with early morning commuters on their way to places unknown.

White-browed Robin-Chat and Tropical Boubou were competing for loudest call as we walked and there was no shortage of other interesting species, such as:

- 🐦 Paradise and Grey-tit Flycatchers
- 🐦 Village Indigobird on the very top of a tree
- 🐦 Namaqua Dove perched on overhead wires
- 🐦 Brubru working its way through the foliage of a large tree
- 🐦 Little Sparrowhawk perched on an open branch
- 🐦 Copper Sunbird (female) peering from its nest in the roadside bush
- 🐦 Brown-crowned Tchagra posing beautifully

- 🐦 on a nearby branch
- 🐦 Greater Blue-eared Starlings
- 🐦 African Golden Oriole – bright yellow against the green foliage

After the walk it was breakfast time followed by some further garden birding. A Schalow's Turaco was calling and I followed the sound to find this potential lifer – a pair were moving about in the dense foliage of a tall tree, making it challenging to get a decent view or a photo, but I gladly accepted this bonus lifer. Fortunately, I heard them calling again a little later, just as I was about to leave, and found one on an open branch, almost inviting me to photograph this handsome species.

The trip back to Kasane was uneventful, other than coming across a trio of elephants along the road traversing Chobe.

An exciting twitch and memories of a brief but busy trip that will stay with me for a long while. 🐦

South America: Iguazu Falls

Ron Searle

During October 2015 I had the pleasure and privilege of undertaking a combination sightseeing and birding trip to South America commencing in extreme NE Argentina at the world famous Iguazu Falls, thereafter flying to Mato Grosso state of Brazil for bird/mammal watching expeditions to the Pantanal, one of the largest wetlands in the Americas and then concluding with a visit to the Amazon Rainforest located in the far north of the state near the town of Alta Floresta. The three-week trip covered four very different habitats, the first of which is dealt with hereafter.

After an overnight flight from Oliver Tambo airport via Sao Paulo to Foz do Iguacu in Brazil, we were met at the airport by a travel agent who transported us across the border into Argentina and to our hotel which was adjacent

to the Iguazu National Park. It rained intermittently during the afternoon allowing minimal opportunities for birding in the extensive grounds of the hotel for our group of eleven, comprising of four South Africans including our leader, a Spanish woman living in the Canary Islands and the balance of participants, one male and five females, from the United States. Nevertheless we did find a Blond-crested Woodpecker, Chestnut-eared Aracari and Spot-billed Toucanet.

The Iguazu Falls, located on the river of the same name, were absolutely mind-blowing, the most voluminous and arguably most scenic falls in the world. Visiting tourists were abundant and very well-provided for in terms of infra-structure including a narrow-gauge train service conveying them from the entrance gate



Iguazu Falls

Run Seattle

to the starting points of several very impressive board-walks, which provided easy access to various viewing platforms along the breadth of the falls. Located within a 67000Ha National Park, with an adjacent park, over the river in Brazil, twice that size, the falls are surrounded by Interior Atlantic Rainforest providing habitat for a surprisingly large number of endemic bird species. The river at the falls must be approximately two kilometres wide and plunges some eighty metres into a gorge, forming cascades, with two hundred and fifty individual waterfalls. Long walks along dirt roads within the park enabled us to accumulate a sizeable bird-list including Green-billed and Toco Toucan, Short-tailed Ant-thrush, Rufous Gnateater and Robust Woodpecker with Rufous-capped Motmot heard but unseen. As in the case of the Victoria Falls of Zimbabwe/Zambia, the Iguazu Falls are responsible for a significant volume of spray rising high into the sky above the falls providing an updraft for the local Black Vultures which they use for gaining altitude. Capuchin

monkeys and Coatis (mongoose-like predators) were ubiquitous and habituated by tourists who, despite signage discouraging the practice, continuously fed the animals a wide variety of junk-food morsels.

The first couple of days were spent viewing the falls from the various spectacular view-points available as well as birding the dirt roads and trails through the rainforest. A myriad of colourful birds were seen on these walks including, Surucua Trogon, Black-fronted Piping Guan, Spot-backed Antshrike, four species of euphonia and seven species of tanager. Hundreds of Great Dusky Swifts were seen circling overhead and several nests of the bird noted clinging precariously to the cliffs alongside some of the waterfalls. The forest canopy, home to superb Black-throated Trogon, Robust Woodpecker, Barred Forest Falcon, Rufous-winged Antwren and many flocks of parrots and parakeets, did not disappoint and the lower layers produced White-bearded and Blue Manakin, Black-billed Scythebill, Southern

Antpitt and four species of woodpecker. The distinctive calls of Brown Tinamou, Tufted Antshrike and Spot-winged Woodquail added atmosphere to the magic of the forest.

One day we visited Uragua-1 Park, south of Iguazu Nat. Park, for birding, but a five-hour walk was rather unproductive, the birds not responding to recordings and the heat and humidity almost unbearable. A visit to two fragments of araucaria woodland (monkey-puzzle trees) for specialist Araucaria Tit-spinetail, was after considerable energy-sapping endeavour, successful although a pair of Short-tailed Nighthawks roosting on the lateral branches of the araucarias, also provided some stimulus for our rather jaded group.

In the afternoon we returned to the town of Iguazu where we visited a private residence whose owners had created a wonderful bird-friendly garden complete with spectator benches for viewing six or seven sugar feeders attracting streams of diminutive hummingbird beauties. Fruit, seed and water were also made available for other avian visitors. We were lucky and identified eight different “hummer” species plus one or two other passerines in what was substantially an urban environment. Black Jacobin, Planalto Hermit, Black-throated Mango, Violet-capped Woodnymph and Swallow-tailed Hummingbird were



Ron Searle

Plush-crested Jay – Iguazu

among those hummers much admired and photographed.

A pre-breakfast two-hour walk on our last morning at Iguazu to a small dam along a concrete road through disturbed forest, surprisingly produced five new lifers including a pair of Brazilian Teals.

In summary, the Iguazu Falls were incredible and those interested in natural wonders would not be disappointed with a visit, the Atlantic Rainforest produced 179 bird species of which 84 were lifers for me, which given that I have birded both Argentina and Brazil in the past, was a very satisfactory result and thoroughly enjoyable experience. 🐦

Spotted Crake – The big twitch

Mark and Alisha Kirk

“The thing that bonds us are those special moments. It’s a private thing, but I think it’s something we all share.” [Todd Newberry on “why birders ‘bird’”]

When this bird was first discovered you just knew the responding ‘birding-quake’ was going to resonate around the local birding community. I remember dropping the *Discoverer* a line of congratulations soon after the bird was first announced. Even then neither of us fully comprehended this opening of Pandora’s Box. The bird in question – the

rarely-seen Spotted Crake & better yet, at Marievale, close to Johannesburg, the sub-region’s birding mecca.

That same day the first pilgrims arrived to pay homage and the bird obliged. By the close of the working-week sightings were more sporadic before the bird disappeared entirely by week’s-end. Early Sunday morning, however,



Spotted Crake/ Gevlekte Riethaan

the bird was rediscovered far-enough away to explain why the bird had 'gone missing' in the first place. In retrospect the bird was probably in plain sight all along & therein lies the secret of this particular species. There is little doubt that members of the *rallidae* [rallids – a cosmopolitan group of small – medium birds] feature regularly in suitable habitat. Notwithstanding, unless birders walk the habitat, an activity not encouraged in the Code of Ethics, these tiny jewels tend to observe a retiring, clandestine routine.

Consequently when news broke of an active but sedentary Spotted Crake the ensuing rush was inevitable. I remember going about our business on that Sunday morning as Sunday-morning business usually demands and although we've seen a handful of Spotted Crake here and elsewhere, the call was too loud to ignore. As these things go, of course, we were stopped for an imaginary traffic-offence and asked to give account of ourselves to the officer involved. The charge – '*communicating on a mobile device whilst in control of a moving vehicle!*' The transgression – '*at that traffic light 50 m further back!*' In the end the offending officer's *name and rank* proved

sufficient persuasion to see us on our way. This delay, however, subsequently cost us spanking views of the bird; an injury to the psyche far worse than an open-zipper on closing-night.

Although we had fleeting views we were left unsatisfied; an idea that tends to gnaw at a birder's soul like salt on cast-iron. We returned, yesterday, a week later for another crack.

Unbeknownst to us, however, most of the interested community had decided to do the same. We were confronted with a sight I haven't seen in years – double rows of vehicles parked *beyond, at & all the way back* from where the bird was last seen. Cool winds of foreboding blew out of the east and for those who appreciate these things, retiring birds usually go to ground & the crake 'obliged' – endearingly-so and for long-enough to spoil breakfast. There's only so much fortitude in a mug of tea or coffee before the shakes begin in earnest.

In the interim we'd left the site after the briefest of looks for places elsewhere in the sanctuary. It transpired that over the course of two weeks two [3?] other Spotted Crake had been recorded in the same vicinity. We went looking for them, away from the maddening crowd. Even so, we paid our insurance and begged a head's-up if the bird did in fact make an appearance. I remember saying to Alisha hours later that the wind had dropped sufficiently for the birds to start foraging. Within the time it takes to write this down the call came through – **Spotted Crake!** I can't say we wasted much time getting back to where we should have stayed all along but as it turns out we recorded two other species [Peregrine Falcon & Booted Eagle] arguably even 'rarer' in that habitat... Other, better birds were seen by another but that's a story for another time.


Rarities like these tend to draw the birding *illuminati* out in the open and for a time these giants walk among ordinary men. Speaking to these individuals confirms my suspicion that most of us know less than nothing about anything and therein lies the quest for more if, in fact, we're partial to '*more*' that is. An empty drum beats loudest and the same applies, quite clearly as it turns out, in the local

birding community. I learnt more in an hour talking to one individual in particular than I have in years. Despite the camaraderie & the social aspect of this activity or *twitch [**to specifically travel for & target a particular bird considered rare or unusual*], the opportunity to swap ideas with softly-spoken experts is unparalleled, particularly if the bird has shown well-enough for most of the party to relax and speak of other things.

I can't account for accurate visitor-numbers of course but I can speak for the three occasions we were on-site. During those three sessions no fewer than 300 people made the effort to see the crake. If the same numbers are extrapolated over the two applicable weeks, a number close to 750 might not be too outrageous. If the bird stays conspicuous and as reliable as its been, who knows where that number will fall.

As these things go & to balance the equation of goodwill perhaps, some negative aspects of this particular twitch need highlighting. It's no secret that the farming community has suffered a great deal recently. The severe drought is confirmed in the lowest recorded annual rainfall figures since 1904. As a result many farmers have seen their fortunes diminished / farms lost. These *men & women* are the backbone of our society & in these dire times a little foresight goes a long way. Fortunately in the last fortnight or so [coinciding with the arrival of the crakes perhaps?]

we've had some general rain. Crops planted some time before have gained a small foothold & although relatively late in the season, may provide a yield in the months to come. This same rain muddied the gravel entrance road to the sanctuary and for the life of me it's hard to credit, but some ignorant bumpkin found the need to drive around the puddles and into the neighbouring farmer's lands; flattening some of his crops in the process. These four or five detours off-road is a shameful indictment of the birding community and an embarrassment. Amazingly some fool had removed the rocks the farmer had subsequently placed at the '*detour entrance / exits*'; I assume to avoid more mud on the road.

In closing we *came*, we *saw*, we *conquered* even if the photos are *fair-to-middling* at best. The addition is just a singleton to our local list, no more important than the first or the second-to-last. We gathered; we engaged and we shared a common interest. Other birds were found, equally special of course and a consequence of concentrated eyes. Notwithstanding, this particular Spotted Crake will stay with us for as long as birds hold us in thrall and for not much more than the uncontaminated joy of seeing something rare. All the while the crake went about its business, quietly gathering food, wholly disinterested in the admiring-throng nearby & that, more than anything else, is the most important thing of all. 



Rarities and Unusual Sightings Report: 31 July 2016

Compiled by André Marx

The period from April to July is traditionally a quieter time for rarities as the migrants have departed and there is generally less birding activity. It was therefore a surprise that a few very significant firsts for the region came to light and this served to illustrate how important it is to carry out birding and atlas-ing in all areas throughout the year as resident bird species are also given to local movements and only by finding them and documenting their occurrence can we learn about this. African Goshawk sightings in Johannesburg were very significant as photos were obtained and confirmed the occurrence of this species in the province, a very exciting record indeed. Will we see this species expand its range and gradually colonise the province due to the habitat changes that have taken place over many decades much as other birds such as the Long-crested Eagle have done? It is a species that is at home in other urban locations such as Cape Town so this is entirely possible. A juvenile Palm-nut Vulture was found at Vulpro in Hartbeespoort; I cannot find any records for the greater Gauteng region for this species going back more than 30 years. A sighting

of an Olive Woodpecker in the Wilge River Valley in the east of our region is also significant as it represents another first for the greater region. It will be interesting to see if this species is recorded throughout the year or if it is just a winter visitor. Other good records were Sickie-winged Chats popping up again in winter, and a sighting of a pair of breeding Burchell's Coursers on the southern edge of the region near Deneyville was also significant and was enjoyed by a number of birders.

National Rarities/ Nasionale rareiteite

Harrier, Western Marsh. Vleivalk, Europese

A male bird was seen at Marievale Bird Sanctuary during the club outing to this venue, 16 Mar 2016 (BLNG).

Regional Rarities/ Streeksrareiteite

Blackcap, Bush. Tiptol, Rooibek-

A single bird was found at Suikerbosrand, 8 May 2016 (TG), and possible the same bird was reported again on 5 Jun 2016 (GvZ & WJ).

Chat, Sickie-winged. Spekvreter, Vlakte-

One bird was located in the Devon area, 30 Apr 2016 (CM), with up to four birds being encountered in the weeks following, with birds still being reported into July.

One bird was in pentad 2700_2800 near Deneyville, Free State, 9 Jul 2016 (AM, GL & CC).

This species is a winter visitor to the region.

Courser, Burchell's. Drawwertjie, Bloukop-

A pair of birds on a nest were located in a field near Deneyville, Free State, in pentad 2700_2755, 26 Jun 2016 (NP). Several birders were able to see this pair of birds in the days following this discovery.



Mark Kirk

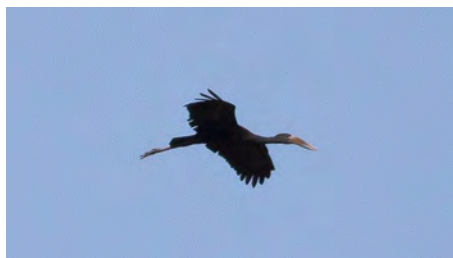
Burchell's Courser/Bloukopdrawwertjie, near Deneyville

Lance Robinson



African Goshawk/ Afrikaanse Sperwer, Fairland, Johannesburg

Lance Robinson



African Openbill,/ Oopbekooievaar Vaalkop Dam

This is a very uncommon species for the greater Gauteng region.

Crane, Wattled. Kraanvoël, Lel-

The long-staying bird in the Devon area was seen again amongst a group of Blue Cranes, 22 May 2016 (NP).

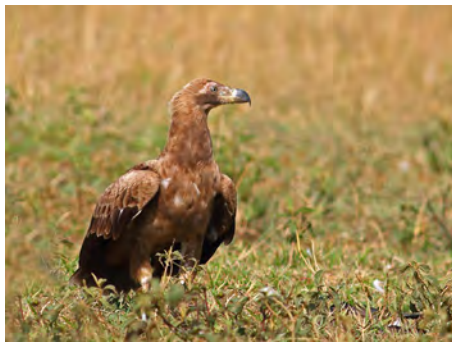
Goshawk, African. Sperwer, Afrikaanse

A remarkable sighting was of one bird at Delta Park, Johannesburg, on 30 May 2016 (RM).

Another record of this species came to light when one bird was photographed in Fairland, Johannesburg, 17 May 2016 (LR).

There have been reports of this species in recent years in both Johannesburg and Pretoria but they have not been confirmed and these records may represent the first photographic evidence for the province. This is possibly a species that is colonising the region due to the changes that have taken place over many years where parts of the province

Andrew Keys



Palm-nut Vulture/ Witaasvoël, at Vulpro, Hartbeespoort

Ben Fouche



Olive Woodpecker/ Gryskopspeg, Wilge River valley

have become more densely treed and now resemble a woodland.

Openbill, African. Ooievaar, Oopbek-

One bird was seen in pentad 2645_2805 at the Vaal Dam, 24 Mar 2016 (EdB);

One bird was at Vaalkop Dam in pentad 2515_2720, 23 Apr 2016 (LR).

Vulture, Palm-nut. Aasvoël, Wit-

An immature bird appeared at Vulpro, Hartbeespoort, in pentad 2540_2755, on 19 May 2016 (KW). *This bird is unknown for the Gauteng region and this is in all probability the first confirmed record for the region.*

Vulture, Lappet-faced. Aasvoël, Swart-

A single bird was reported from Vulpro, near Hartbeespoort Dam, 21 May 2016 (JJ).



Ben Fouche
Ben Fouche

Mountain Wagtail/ Bergkwikkie, Wilge River Valley

This species is occasionally recorded in the region at vulture restaurants.

Wagtail, Mountain. Kwikkie, Berg-

One bird was located at Qodesh in the Wilge River Valley in north-eastern Gauteng, 13 Jul 2016 (R&KW). This bird was recorded by several birders in the weeks following this sighting.

Woodpecker, Olive. Speg, Gryskop-

A male bird was an exciting find at Amanzimtaba Resort in the Wilge River Valley, north-eastern Gauteng (pentad 2535_2900), 2 Jul 2016 (BF & TM).

This represents the first record of this species in the greater Gauteng region.

**Other interesting observations/
Ander interessante waarnemings**

Bustard, Denham's. Pou, Veld-

A sighting of two birds at Bushwillow Estate, Vaalkop Dam (pentad 2515_2725), is a first during the atlas period (2007-2016) and an unusual record for the locality, 23 Apr 2016 (LR).

Buzzard, European. Wespiedief

One bird was sighted near Three Rivers in southern Gauteng, 30 Apr 2016 (DV).

Hawk, African Cuckoo. Valk, Koekoek-

One bird was found in a bluegum plantation in pentad 2545_2715, near Rustenburg, an unusual location for the species (ER & NR).

Osprey. Valk, Vis-

One bird was at Roodeplaat Dam in pentad 2535_2820 on 22 Apr 2016, a fairly late record (NP).



Ben Fouche

Marabou Storks/ Maraboe, Kloppersbos

Owl, Southern White-faced. Uil, Witwang-

A single bird was found to be roosting in a garden in Clubview, Centurion, 12 May 2016 (JM), an unusual record for the area.

Starling, Common. Spreeu, Europese

One bird was at Rietvlei NR, 16 Jun 2016, (FB & LR).

Two birds were at Northern Farm during the club outing there, 20 Jul 2016 (BLNG).

Stork, Marabou. Maraboe

Two birds were found in pentad 2625_2815 in the vicinity of Suikerbosrand, a surprise sighting for the area, 23 Apr 2016 (DT).

Approximately 30 birds were found in a wetland at Kloppersbos in pentad 2525_2820, east of Hammanskraal, 11 Jun 2016 (RG, BF, TB, TM), an unusually large concentration for the area.

Observers/ Waarnemers:

- André Marx (AM)
- Ben Fouche (BF)
- BirdLife Northern Gauteng members (BLNG)
- Cameron Meyer (CM)
- Charles Coetzee (CC)
- Duard Teichert (DT)
- Dylan Vasapolli (DV)
- Ernst Retief (ER)
- Errol de Beer (EdB)
- Fransie O'Brien (FB)
- Gebre van Zyl (GvZ)
- Greg Lock (GL)
- Jannie Jansen (JJ)

Jason McCormick (JM)
Karin Wiesler (KW)
Kerri Wolter (KW)
Lance Robinson (LR)
Laura Jordaan (LJ)
Natasja Retief (NR)
Niall Perrins (NP)
Richard Montinaro (RM)
Rihann Geyser (RG)
Rolf Wiesler (RW)
Theuns Botha (TB)
Tiaan Muller (TM)
Toni Geddes (TG)
Wesley Jarvis (WJ)

This column is mainly concerned with observations of rarities and interesting sightings made in the Greater Gauteng region, defined as being 100 km from the centre of both Johannesburg and Pretoria, however observations made further afield are also welcome. While the majority of records are included it is sometimes necessary to exclude some depending on whether the subject matter has already been well reported. Occasionally records are sourced from the Internet and from SABAP2 records. Members are invited to submit details of sightings to André Marx at e-mail turaco@telkomsa.net or 083 4117674.

New Members April – September 2016

Ons verwelkom die volgende nuwe lede en hoop dat julle gou tuis sal voel. Ons sien uit daarna om julle by ons aandvergaderings, daguitstappies of tydens 'n naweekkamp te leer ken.

A warm welcome to all our new members. We trust you will enjoy your birding with us and look forward to seeing you at our evening meetings, day outings or weekend trips.

Please contact the Secretary at secretary@blng.co.za or phone her on cell number 083 391 2327 for any queries or information.

Dawie Rotteveel	Sinoville
Antoinette Prinsloo	Moreletapark
Toriso Tlou	Pretoria
Keanu Canto	Faerie Glen
David & Linda Proctor	De Wildt
Thea Groenewald	Silverton
Wilna Lubbe	Groenkloof
Johan Meyer	Highveld
Pieter & Henda Lombaard	Silver Lakes
Louise Kirsten	Highveld
Andries Bekker	Pierre van Ryneveld
Anna Marais	Lyttleton
Osie van Niekerk	Lynnwoodrif
Michael Cardoso	Johannesburg
Sydney & Ronel Zeederberg	Lyttleton

Donasies/Donations (April – July 2016)

Once again we want to sincerely thank you for your generous donations. Your contributions help us to reach our goal towards supporting bird conservation projects and is much appreciated.

Weereens 'n groot dankie vir u donasie. U bydrae verseker dat ons 'n groter bydrae tot die bewaring van voëls kan lewer. Ons waardeer dit opreg.

Christiaan van der Merwe
Jeanne Joubert
Andre Taljaard
Leslie Wilton
Estelle Raath
Sita Rootman
Antony Cooper
Amanda le Roux

IMPORTANT NOTICE/ BELANGRIKE AANKONDIGING

The *Laniarius* is now only distributed electronically. However, hard copies will still be printed for those who prefer them. This is just a reminder that if you wish to receive a hard copy of the newsletter, please contact the Secretary to register. The cost involved is R75 for the next 3 issues.

Die *Laniarius* word nou slegs elektronies versprei. As u nog die harde kopie van die nuusbrieff wil ontvang, stuur asb 'n e-pos aan die Sekretaresse om dit te reel. Koste daaraan verbonde is R75 vir die volgende 3 uitgawes.

Rita de Meillon
083 391 2327
secretary@blng.co.za

BirdLife Northern Gauteng					
Laniarius advertising costs (cost shown in Rands)					
Print ads	1 insert	2 inserts	3 inserts	4 inserts	
Back page	600	1000	1300	1500	full colour
Full page	400	700	950	1150	
Half page	250	400	500	675	
Quarter page	125	200	250	275	
Loose insert	300	500	650	750	
Smalls	50	90	120	140	5 lines/ ad
Notes					
1. Advertiser to supply print-ready artwork					
2. Ads can be placed in alternate issues					
3. Ads must be paid in advance					
4. Ads are in black & white except back page which is in full colour					
5. For loose inserts advertiser to supply insert					
6. The committee maintains the right to accept any advertisements					

BUFFELSDRIFT Rust de Winter

**ACCOMMODATION
(R350/p/night)**



PHOTOGRAPHY



BIRDING



BOOKINGS
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BIRDERS