

Birdlife Overberg Newsletter 17 – August 2025



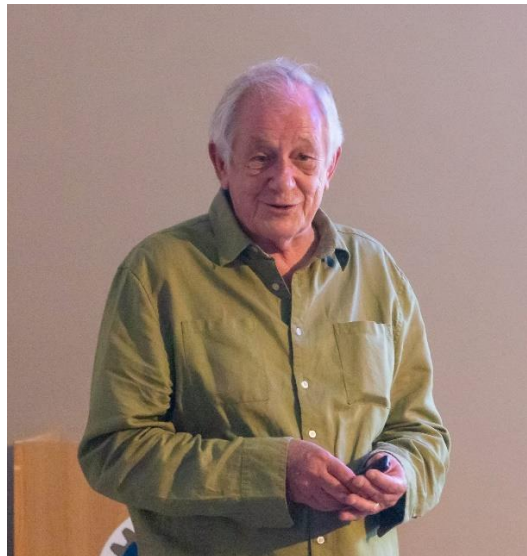
In Memory of ANTON ODENDAL

It is with deep sadness that I write this newsletter typing the words that Anton has passed away. He was the founder of our club and watched it grow from humble beginnings over 20 years ago. His passion for birding and a true believer in conservation was an inspiration to all that knew him - he will be sorely missed.

On a personal note, Anton was my friend and mentor. He took me under his wing and practically taught me all I know about birding in South Africa, especially in the Overberg.

I will miss his phone calls and emails, and the banter we shared, the fact that he was always willing to help and advise me, and that he had faith in me to take over the Chair of the club. I hope I do him proud.

Anton's knowledge, warmth, and generosity touched not only my life but the lives of many. We will all miss him dearly and remember him every time we go out birding.



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Club News

Diary Dates

11 August: Monthly Meeting - Guest speaker Cape Leopard Trust at 6.30pm Mollergren Hall

23 August: Monthly Outing - Van der Stel Pass

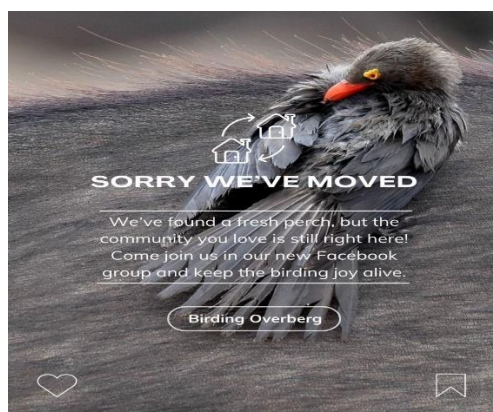
8 September: Monthly Meeting will be a “Bring and Braai” with Members’ Photos at 6.30 Mollergren Hall

27 September: Monthly Outing - Stanford - a Bird Ringing demonstration and outing at Flower Valley and Platbos Forest afterwards

As always, more details on all events will be posted on the website and members WhatsApp group nearer the time.

Please note that for this year only our Year-end Function normally held in November will now take place in September, and our Fundraising evening will be held on Saturday 15th November.

BirdLife Overberg’s Facebook page has now changed its name to Birding Overberg



Please note that the club’s Facebook page, **BirdLife Overberg**, has now ceased to be active and we have moved to a new page called **Birding Overberg**, so please don’t post on the old site but ‘like’ and ‘follow’ the new page.

Farther afield

Lastly, Graeme Hatley has started posting a series of short birding reports on our website and on the members’ WhatsApp group from locations outside the Overberg called “Farther afield”.

Next time you take a trip outside the region, please write a short report and submit it to Graeme with images. See the website for ideas and the type of content he’s looking for - short and sweet!

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Why do we ring birds?

In many cases, researchers know more about intercontinental bird migration than localised bird movements. For example, between October to December, the Nuwejaars Wetlands become a temporary home to White-throated Swallow, before they depart in March. But we still don't know exactly where these birds spend the non-breeding season – somewhere in “central Africa” is about as precise as current data gets.

Similarly, for the endemic Cape Sugarbird – which only occurs in the Cape Floral Kingdom and is a regular sighting in the NWSMA – we know little about how they navigate the fire-driven cycles of the fynbos biome and move between protea patches, especially when there is little food available.

This is why bird ringing is important – and provides many answers to researchers. During a recent visit, the Biodiversity and Development Institute, working with the NWSMA, captured 98 birds of 26 species. That included African Rail, African Snipe, Little Rush Warbler, Black Crake and Southern Grey-headed Sparrow.

Should any of these birds be caught again in future, it will not only provide data on how long the birds live, but also the age at which birds start breeding, and much more info.

The club hopes to set up a bird ringing session for members to attend and learn about this fascinating subject in September, so keep a look out for the details on the website and on the members WhatsApp group.



A Quick Guide to Birding Safely: By Adam Cruikshank

Although the statistics are from the USA, (unfortunately, I can't find any relating to South Africa), the message and advice is still valid and important to take heed of – Steve Peck.

Birding is currently one of the fastest-growing hobbies in the world. A blog article on the Chirp Birding website gave a staggering statistic about birding in the United States, ***'In the US, the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service compile a National Survey of Fishing, Hunting, and Wildlife-Associated Recreation every five years. Their most recent 2016 report estimates that there were 45.1 million birdwatchers (16 years or older) in the country.'***

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As exciting as the news is that birding is growing at the rate that it is, we also need to remember that as the profile of birding grows, there is a greater awareness from not only those who are interested in nature but also from those that are interested in the equipment that birders carry. The sad reality is that we are now hearing more and more accounts of birders that are becoming victims of criminals.

Many birders go out into the field with valuable equipment – binoculars, fancy camera equipment, 4x4 vehicles, and a range of other items that are very attractive to those who wish to ‘make a quick buck’ at the expense of someone else. A sticker on a car that says ‘I stop for birds’ might be of interest to those that are interested in birding, but as criminals become aware of the equipment that birders use, that same sticker may make someone with motives that are not so pure aware of what equipment that person has with them.

As we go about in our pursuit of the birds that we so love, we **MUST** stay vigilant. I am not saying that everyone that has been a victim of crime has in some way not been vigilant, but we can all do small things to lessen the risk of us becoming another statistic in the police records.



So, here are a few things that we can do as birders to keep our guard up:

1) **BIRD IN A GROUP** – Personally, there is nothing I enjoy more than getting out into nature by myself and getting my ‘birding fix’. There is something strangely therapeutic about getting out into nature alone. As much I enjoy birding alone, I have realised that, for my own safety, I need to bird with other people as often as possible. As with a flock of birds, the greater the numbers the smaller the risk of one becoming a target. We know that criminals are becoming more brazen now, but birding in groups still makes it a bit safer. This is why it’s becoming more important to belong to a local bird club – this not only allows you to connect to the club outings that are done in groups but also, as your network of birding friends grows, it becomes easier to make arrangements to bird with

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other people when you want to go to places. The small annual fee of joining a club is well worth the value when you take this into account.

2) BE AWARE OF YOUR SURROUNDINGS - When you look through binoculars and cameras, it is quite easy to become unaware of what is happening around you. Birding, in many ways, offers one the opportunity to shut out the noise of the world and focus on the birds that you are out to see. It is important to focus on the bird and its behaviour – but it is just as important to be aware of what is happening around you. Become aware of vehicles and people that are moving around the area – lookout for unusual behaviour when you see people in the area. This is also a lot easier when birding with other people, while you are looking for birds, someone else in the group can keep an eye out on what is happening around you. If you notice someone that is displaying any sort of strange behaviour – it is a good idea to listen to your instinct and rather be safe than sorry.

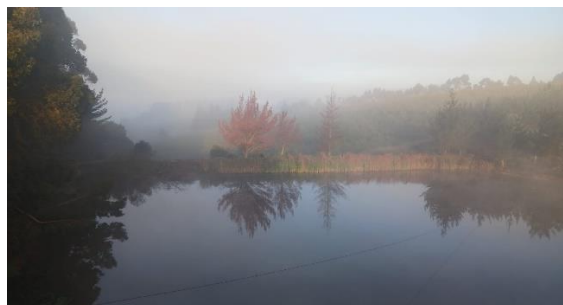
3) READ THE NEWS – Be aware of crime hotspots and stay clear of them as much as possible. Your life is more important than trying to add another bird to your list in someplace that is not safe. Our local bird club has a WhatsApp group that members can connect with, and this allows us to stay informed of many of the incidents that take place in our area. There are also many great birding groups on Facebook that provide valuable information on the safety of various birding locations. We don't need to become crippled with fear, but we do need to be aware of places to stay clear of.

4) BE CAREFUL WHAT YOU POST ON SOCIAL MEDIA – I often see birders placing posts of what equipment they are using and where they are going to bird on specific days. This advises criminals about where they can target their next victim and the equipment they might be able to acquire. When we post on certain Facebook groups, we do not know everyone on the group and why they have joined the group – so always be careful before posting. Also, be careful of friend invites from people that you do not know - this again allows people to track whatever you post on your personal profile.

It is sad that we need to put out these kinds of posts, but I hope that it will ensure that we have a far smaller list of crime statistics amongst our birding community.

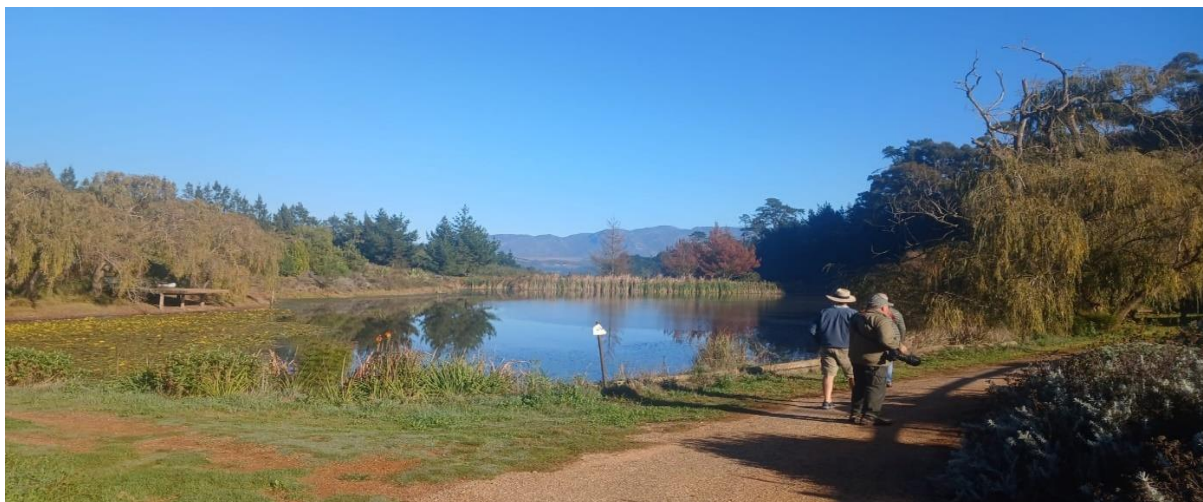
Trip report: Jessie Walton's farm Saturday 24 May 24, 2025, by Jill Wheeler

With the mist hugging the mountains, 16 keen birders set off towards Elgin, spirits high at the prospect of visiting Jessie Walton's farm. It was good to see some new faces and we look forward to welcoming you to BLO in the future.



Scenery images by – Christa van Schalkwyk

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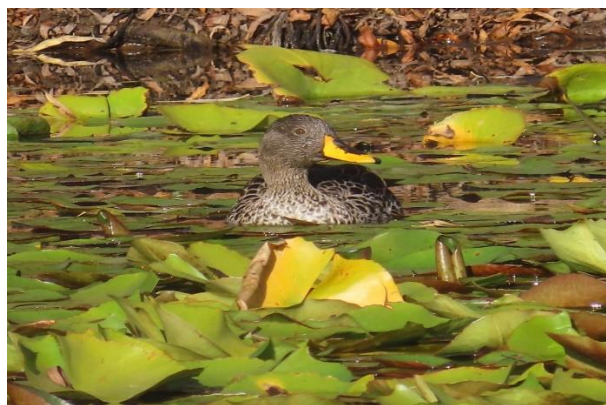
Arriving at Jessie's farm in the damp mist, we all dived into flasks of hot beverages and rusks before heading off into the magnificent grounds surrounding her house. A year on from our last visit, the fynbos has firmly established itself and the shrubs were lush and blooming; sunbirds everywhere enjoying the large protea flowers and many other interesting flowering plants. The botany we will leave for another day! But there is an enormous variety of flowers to see, enticing nectar seeking birds.

Jessie walked us around the gardens listening and identifying birds as she went – Malachite Sunbirds everywhere, their iridescent coats gleaming in the early morning sunlight, Southern Double-collared Sunbirds, Cape White-eye, Common Waxbill, Cape Sugarbird, and the Olive Thrush and Levillant's Cisticola calling from the shrubbery. The air was full of bird calls and clicking frogs, the morning light perfect for excellent photography.

As we headed back for a well-earned second breakfast, admiring the lacy cobwebs glinting in the sun, the mist had cleared, and the dam was alive with Yellow-billed Ducks, African Black Duck, Reed Cormorant and Little Grebes. A Black-headed Heron was seen flying overhead, a Black Crake calling in the reeds and a shy, Black-crowned Night Heron could be seen hiding from the action.



Black Ducks- Johan vd Westhuizen



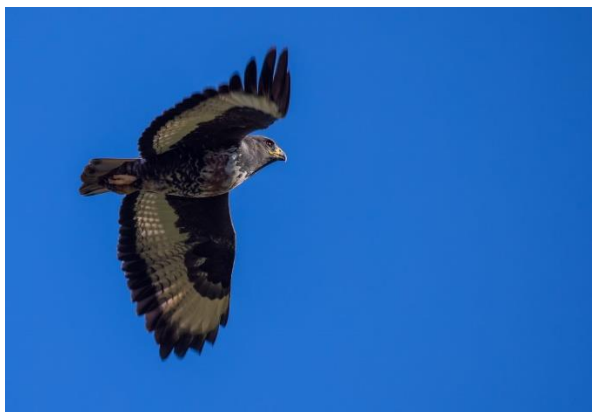
Yellow-billed Duck- Ruth Vary

Jessie's farm is renowned as a special place to see owls and on our way down to the nursery we were lucky enough to have clear sightings of Spotted Eagle-Owls. Camouflage broken, there was much excitement as two of the owls were in full view. As we left, they were softly calling to each other and we tiptoed away, in awe of the spectacle we had just witnessed.

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The nursery is another special place; towering trees creating a sanctuary for many birds including the Cape Weaver, the Southern Grey-headed Sparrow, Speckled Mousebird, Fork-tailed Drongo, and a special sighting of an African Olive Pigeon.

Leaving the nursery, we headed off to the bird hide and a walk around the dam. There were plenty of elegant African Darters and a Hamerkop could clearly be seen on the branches of the dead tree. A Giant Kingfisher flew by, and a Little Rush Warbler could be seen on the far side of the dam.



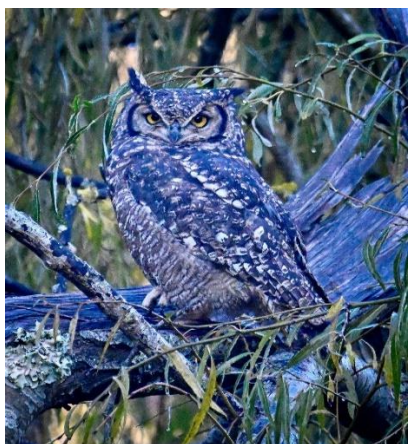
Jackal Buzzard - Riaan Swart



Black-crowned Night Heron – Chris van Schalkwyk

Our concentration was interrupted by Jessie shouting for someone with a camera – on the far side of the dam she had seen a Greater Honeyguide! Sadly, no photo but what a sighting.

On the way to the dam, we were lucky enough to see an Olive Woodpecker and a distinctive hole in the trunk of the tree indicated a nesting place. As we walked back to our cars the Woodpecker was spotted, insect in its beak, landing at the hole and a tiny beak popping out to snatch the morsel! We stood statue-still! What a gift to watch this feat of nature. Big lenses out in the hope of more action! The tiny beak appeared a few times, looking for more food and the distinctive cry of the baby Woodpecker could be heard. We all waited patiently, staring at the hole, oblivious to another large Spotted Eagle Owl calmly sitting almost above our heads!



Spotted Eagle Owl- Iain Geldart



Olive Woodpecker- Riaan Swart



Baby Olive Woodpecker – Chris van Schalkwyk

A wonderful morning of birding and many thanks to Johan for his superb organization and to Jessie Walton for her generous hospitality and steadfast commitment and dedication to the preservation of this wonderful natural environment. Overall, 55 species were identified.

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From South Africa to China: Uncovering the incredible migration of the European Roller

GPS data and photographs from a Chinese ornithologist confirm for the first time that a European Roller from South Africa migrated to breed in China.

Photograph credit: Jessica Wilmot, BirdLife South Africa.



10 July 2025, Johannesburg: BirdLife South Africa is thrilled to announce a new milestone in migratory bird research: The first confirmation that European Rollers (*Coracias garrulus*) migrate between South Africa and China. A European Roller, fitted with a GPS tracker by a BirdLife South Africa conservationist in Limpopo, South Africa, in March 2025, has been relocated in Xinjiang, China, after completing a journey of over 15,000 kilometres - through 13 countries - in just over three months.

The individual bird, affectionately named 'Rory' by the late Pamela Isdell, one of BirdLife South Africa's Honorary Patrons, was found by Professor Ma Ming from the Xinjiang Institute of Ecology & Geography, Chinese Academy of Sciences. After three days of intensive searching along the rugged Tian Shan Mountains on the edge of the Gurbantünggüt Desert, guided by BirdLife South Africa's GPS data, Professor Ma and his team located Rory near a nest, indicating that Rory has found his breeding ground for the season. Without Professor Ma and his team's determination, Rory's breeding site would remain an abstract point on a map. Instead, this growing partnership is now offering valuable, on-the-ground insights into the habitats European Rollers rely on in this region of China.

European Rollers are charismatic and beautiful, familiar to South Africans during the summer months that the birds spend here, but few know the incredible voyage these birds undertake each year. Their full migratory routes, particularly those of the eastern subspecies (*C. g.*

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semenowi), have remained largely unknown. That began to change in March 2024, when BirdLife South Africa began to fit European Rollers with solar-powered GPS trackers. Since then, seven European Rollers (Hera, Apollo, Atlas, Juno, Rory, Aether, and Royal Wasi) have transformed speculation into data, mapping their routes across continents in near real time. These birds have been tracked to presumed breeding grounds in Uzbekistan, Afghanistan, and Kyrgyzstan, and now China, but this discovery is the first time a tracked bird has been physically sighted in its breeding ground.

Why It Matters: A Call for Flyway Collaboration

Rory's journey illustrates the core of BirdLife South Africa's Flyway and Migrants project: migratory birds depend on a network of viable habitats, which are collectively called flyways, that stretch across borders, cultures, and continents. These flyways are used by millions of birds each year, but without protection, these remarkable migrations, shaped over millennia, could collapse.

That is why we track European Rollers. Across Europe and Central Asia, their populations are in decline, with local extinctions already recorded in parts of their breeding range. In response, governments under the Convention on Migratory Species (CMS) adopted the Flyway Action Plan for the European Roller, calling for urgent, coordinated action across the species' entire range.

Protecting the European Roller demands a flyway-scale approach - one that considers every phase of their lifecycle, from breeding grounds in the north, the critical stopover sites where they rest and refuel during migration, to their non-breeding habitats in the south. To achieve that, international collaboration is essential; satellite tracking provides the big-picture view, but what happens on the ground matters just as much. Local knowledge and conservation action guided by collaboration across the flyway is essential to securing the future of these birds. Professor Ma's insights have now provided a better understanding of the threats that Rory and his clutch of chicks are facing. The landscape of the breeding ground is dominated by cotton fields, currently plagued by a pest outbreak. Drones are being used to spray pesticides which pose a potential threat to the survival of the European Rollers and their food sources in the area.

Jessica Wilmot, BirdLife South Africa's Flyway and Migrants Project Manager, explains: "It was surreal receiving photos of Rory - thousands of kilometres from where we first encountered

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him in South Africa. It is a testament to what a flyway conservation approach can achieve.

Professor Ma's enthusiasm to collaborate has opened the door for impactful conservation efforts across continents. How often do we get the chance to work with passionate individuals not just in another country, but on an entirely different continent? I'm incredibly excited to see how this partnership grows."

This milestone underscores the importance of international collaboration in migratory bird conservation. BirdLife South Africa is calling on researchers, birdwatchers, conservationists, and passionate individuals across Africa, the Middle East, and Central Asia to join this effort. Whether their region hosts breeding, stopover, or wintering sites, people can play a vital role in uncovering and protecting the full migratory story of the European Roller. BirdLife South Africa needs help to write the next chapter of this extraordinary migration story. Working collaboratively, scientists and conservationists across the world's flyways can ensure that future generations will be able to look to the skies each summer and catch that unforgettable turquoise flash of a European Roller.

Some good news on the future of wind turbines

What has been described as 'South Africa's first automated bird protection system' has gone live at Red Rocket's Brandvalley and Rietkloof wind farms, using tech-powered detection and turbine shutdowns to protect vulnerable species.

An automated bird protection system has been installed at Red Rocket's wind farms between the Western Cape and Northern Cape provinces in South Africa with advanced shut down-on-demand functionality.

The system has been fully installed and is active at the 144MW Brandvalley and 144MW Rietkloof Wind Farms, which announced the commencement of commercial operations in April and are the first two projects under Round 5 of the Renewable Energy Independent Power Producer Procurement Programme (REIPPPP) to take on this technology.

Meanwhile closer to home...

When you have just 43 seconds to save a life, time and communication are key. That's how long it takes to bring the blades of a wind turbine to a complete stop and indicates how far in advance a bird at risk of collision must be spotted. That's why, come rain, cold, or extreme heat, you'll find Clarissa Mars outdoors, scanning the horizon.

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As the Senior Biodiversity Team lead for Engie, which manages the Excelsior and Golden Valley wind energy programmes, Clarissa is the first person in South Africa to lead a Shutdown on Demand protocol. Since 2020, her surveillance programme has been monitoring the movement and flight paths of priority species. When a bird is spotted within two kilometres and approaching, she instructs control room operators to temporarily halt one or more turbines to prevent contact.

Situated in Swellendam, Excelsior has 13 turbines and plays a key role in supplying renewable energy. But the farm is also in close proximity to critical breeding habitats of some of South Africa's vulnerable and endangered avian species. "We do not choose between clean energy and protecting wildlife," Clarissa says. "We're not here to just install turbines and walk away. We are here to care about the environment too. It's all about accountability."

By leading a team of trained observers, Clarissa can improve the accuracy of their sightings and the speed at which they respond. "A big part of my job is mentorship," she says. Working with people from the local community, Clarissa is developing their conservation and fieldwork skills, as well as instilling a love for South Africa's birds. In particular, they're on the lookout for Cape vultures, Verreaux's eagles, martial eagles, black harriers, white storks, and our national birds – blue cranes.



"The best part of my job is when I go home knowing that there weren't any fatalities that day and also that my team is learning to become experts in what they do," Clarissa says. "What we do here on site has a bigger purpose, and that's protecting wildlife for the next generation."

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SEABIRD CONSERVATION PROGRAMME

Christina Hagen, in collaboration with the Southern African Foundation for the Conservation of Coastal Birds (SANCCOB) and CapeNature, released a group of 30 hand-reared juvenile African Penguins at the De Hoop Nature Reserve colony. The birds were kept overnight at the colony and then released the following morning. They all went out to sea (some more hesitant than others!) and will spend the next few years learning how to find fish before, hopefully, returning to De Hoop to breed.

Trip report: Stanford and surrounds

A small group of birders met on a chilly morning at the Willem Appel se Dam bird hide. The early morning sky was stunning with beautiful light illuminating the dam. The mood was good, despite the cold wind.

The birding started with a highlight. There was a group of four to five African Palm Swifts rapidly flying overhead. Clearly there were insects for them to eat, as there was a mixed flock of unseasonal Barn Swallows together with Large Rock Martins. A group of Alpine Swifts and a Brown-throated Martin made an appearance.

On the water there were Black Crakes putting on a good display on the lilies just in front of the hide. The iridescent feathers on the African Swamphens made for great photographs in the early morning light.



African Darter and Black Crake – Ruth Vary African Purple Swamphen – Leanie Herselman

From there we made our way to the banks of the Klein River on the other side of the village. This is generally a good spot for kingfishers, particularly the Pied and Giant Kingfishers. Unfortunately, neither of these made an appearance for us. However, we were lucky to get a sighting of a Brown-

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hooded Kingfisher. These are not regulars in Stanford, but there have been a few records over the past few weeks.



Black-winged Kite & Rock Kestrel – Johan vd Westhuzien Cape Sugarbird – Leanie Herselman

After a timely coffee break, we headed out for a short gravel-road loop just outside the village. This is a good spot for Cape Sugarbird and Orange-breasted Sunbird. Even through the strong wind was putting many of the birds down, we did get sightings of both of these wonderful birds.

The gravel road also yielded some local raptors, including Jackal Buzzard, Black-winged Kite, Rock Kestrel and the elusive Black Harrier.

A good morning covering a diverse habitat resulted in at least forty-four species being recorded, with some rarer birds as highlights.

Agulhas Plains Birding Project reported the registering of the Plains as a RAMSCAR site.

There was a historic moment at Agulhas National Park last Tuesday when the Agulhas Plains RAMSCAR Site was officially registered.

This is the first important step in getting the plains cemented as a site but still needs to be verified by RAMSCAR.

A Ramsar site is a wetland designated as being of international importance under the Ramsar Convention.

These sites are recognized for their ecological significance and are managed to ensure their conservation and wise use. South Africa currently has 30 Ramsar sites, including the Berg Estuary, Verlorenvlei, Bot-Kleinmond, De Mond, De Hoop vlei, Dasse, Dyer and Geyser Islands, Langebaan, Wilderness Lakes and False Bay Nature Reserves are all Ramsar sites in the Western Cape.

The Ramsar Convention is an international treaty for the conservation and sustainable use of wetlands. The convention was signed in Ramsar, Iran, in 1971.

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Agulhas National Park Images

Trip report Saturday 26 July: Napier – Tapestry of the Overberg Jill Wheeler

Probably one of the most popular birding outings on the calendar, this is the Overberg tapestry at its best. Just the drive towards Napier is magnificent with deep green, rolling wheat fields, bright yellow canola fields, moody skies contrasted with a backdrop of ancient, watchful mountains. The air was sharp and clean – a mere 4 degrees – and the early mist contributed to the drama of the rolling countryside.



The Overberg – Iain Geldhart



Blue Crane – Ruth Vary

Eight cars with 24 spirited birders quickly downed steaming mugs of hot beverages and equipped with our walkie talkies we were ready to bird! We were quickly into farmland with cattle staring at us with a mild curiosity, steam rising from the feed and the cows, in the cold damp air. Birds flitted through this pastoral scene; by the feed, on the troughs, perched on the fence and darting in the bushes. It was hard to keep up with Steve's running commentary and you needed eyes everywhere. Plenty of Yellow Canaries, African Stonechats, Cape Weavers, Pied Starlings and lovely to see the African Pipit, a Bokmakierie, Karoo Prinia and Capped Wheatear. As one of the back cars the Large-billed Lark kept defeating us but finally we managed to win the game of hide and seek! And spot a couple hopping through the field! Patience!

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Large-billed Lark – Johan vd Westhuizen



Cape Grassbird – Johan Olivier



Agulhas LB Lark- Steve Peck

We drove past Jonaskraal admiring the characteristic red aloes and spotting a Cape Grysbok and Springbok in the distance. We were very lucky to see two Spotted Eagle-Owls quietly sheltering and very camouflaged in a large group of eucalyptus trees. This resulted in much excitement and clicking of cameras.

The vibrant tapestry of the Overberg continued as we were treated to the blue thread of the elegant Blue Crane, nonchalantly sharing the field with a flock of ungainly sheep. Nature at its best.

50% of the SA population of Blue Crane are found in the Overberg Wheatbelt area and we need to remember how privileged we are to see Blue Crane on a regular basis. Powerful wings lifting into the air, the acrobatics of mating and that guttural “pterodactyl” sound could be heard often during the morning.

As we continued along the road a graceful Black-headed Heron was disturbed and flew over our heads, whilst on the ground could be seen Cape Robin-Chats, Yellow Bishops, a Levillant’s Cisticola and a lone Three-banded Plover.



Looking for Karoo Korhaan and finding them!

Off to see the Spottys!

Images by Rynhard vd Merwe



Levillant’s Cisticola – Leanie Herselman



Familiar Chat – Johan Olivier



Jackal Buzzard – Rynhard vd Merve

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Steve introduced us to the resident African Fish Eagles, which could be seen in the distance, taking a powerful pose at the top of a large tree. Always a special sighting even from a distance. On the horizon a Denham's Bustard was spotted and later a Karoo Korhaan in the fields; neither wanted to be photographed so we were lucky to see them through binoculars. Let's not forget the several sightings of Jackal Buzzard and Rock Kestrel: beautifully captured by some of our photographers. Steve Peck shot a reflective Peregrine Falcon, but it didn't reflect long enough for most of us to see it, so grateful for the excellent photograph.

As a result of the rains, there were many ponds close to the roadside and several water birds were noted included a Cape Teal, a Cape Shoveler, Common Moorhen, a Yellow-billed Duck and a Giant Kingfisher. Many Red-billed Quelea could be seen darting amongst the grasses, and the front car was lucky enough to see a Malachite Kingfisher.

The countryside became increasingly dramatic, and we developed a new meaning for the word "landscaping" – a birder who was "landscaping" was taking photos of the incredible scenery... and not birds! The canola fields are an impressive seasonal highlight and attract many birders and nature lovers. Likewise, Steve reminded us of the strips of Renosterveld running through this incredible scenery, quite unspectacular in comparison and yet as a unique ecosystem, a vital thread in this tapestry. It's worth remembering that this is home to the Black Harrier, a threatened raptor which depends on this fragile, endangered ecosystem.

All too soon the birding outing was over, and we said goodbye to the ubiquitous sheep, the elegant blue crane and the 72 species of birds counted during the morning. Many thanks to Johan for his impeccable organisation and to Steve Peck for leading the outing and providing us with his extensive local knowledge. Without the walkie talkies and the experienced birders, many of us would never have seen all those birds. What a privilege to enjoy such camaraderie in this unique environment we call home.



Birding... Cathy Bruce



Peregrine – Steve Peck



Black-headed Heron – Steve Bailey



Rock Kestrel- Johan vd Westhuizen



Spotted eagle Owl – Johan Herselman



Blue Cranes – Cathy Bruce

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BirdLife Overberg Weekend Away is getting closer!



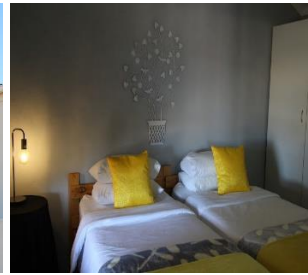
Hopefully by now you all will have read about this fabulous event the club has organized for the weekend of 12-14th September, a birding trip to the banks of the river Berg.

So don't forget, to secure a place, you will need to book directly with the venue by the 9th of August!

All the details, price and booking process (don't forget to use the special discount we have negotiated) are on the website, WhatsApp group, and we have sent you all an individual email as well.

If you can't find what you're looking for or just want a little more detail, then please contact Cathy Bruce on 082 558 1636 or email arixoma@icloud.com

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Let's make this a success and the start of many more weekends away in the future - book now!

Yearly Fundraiser

Lastly, our yearly Fundraiser this year will be held on Saturday 15th November. It will be a fabulous evening - a great guest speaker has been booked, we will offer a 3-course meal with complimentary wine, an auction of a wide range of items will be held, along with a raffle. It's going to be a full, fun evening so put the date in your diary and look out for further details nearer the time.

As always, my appreciation goes to everyone who has contributed to this newsletter, with reports, photos, articles and snippets of interest. Please keep them coming.

Editor

Steve