

AUGUST 2013

July seems to have flown past faster than The Flash himself, and judging by the chilly evenings, it is most definitely still winter. Unfortunately the only birding I have been doing this month is dodging the 'mossies' on my way to work in the mornings. Hopefully not everyone was as unlucky as me.

I am looking forward to hearing all about your August adventures!
 Happy birding, until next time

Chantelle

If you come across any interesting information or images, please feel free to send it to me at chant66@gmail.com



Makuya Park trip report

By Derek and Daniel Engelbrecht

On the weekend of 11-14 July 2013 we took a break to Singo Safari Lodge in Makuya Park in the far north-eastern parts of the Limpopo Province. Bordering the Pafuri region of the Kruger National Park, birding is excellent and there is always the chance of stumbling upon something unusual. However, being winter we did not exactly expect fireworks, but we managed to tick off 81 species during our time there and do some SABAP2 atlassing too. With lions roaring around the camp every night and buffalo drinking water below the camp, we were understandably not too keen to go wandering around in the bush and birding was mostly done on the beaten track or from the deck of our safari tent. The view from Singo camp is breathtakingly beautiful and perched (excuse the pun) upon a cliff, it is a good spot to do raptor spotting from.



The view from the deck of Singo camp. The Lebubu River in the foreground is the boundary between Makuya Park and the Kruger National Park.

Some noteworthy sightings included a resident pair of White-crowned Lapwings, a pair of Saddle-billed Storks, Southern Ground Hombill, Retz's and White-crowned Helmet-shrikes, Stierling's Wren-warbler, and no fewer than seven raptors, including Bateleur, Lappet-faced Vulture and a pair of Martial Eagles perched in a Baobab. On Saturday night (or shall I say Sunday very early Sunday morning), a Pel's Fishing-Owl was calling for at least two hours just below the camp, but roaring lions nearby shelved any ideas of going down to the river to look for it. The highlight of the trip was undoubtedly the resident pair of Mocking Cliff-chats who kept us entertained with their cheeky habit of helping themselves to food in the kitchen or on the deck whenever they felt like it, and their skilful mimicking of other birds. They seem to miss the European Bee-eaters as they often imitated them, causing us to scan the skies in the hope of seeing the first signs of summer!

Turkey arrests a kestrel for spying

Sourced by Joe Grasel and written by Rosanne Palmer on July 27 2013 for *International Business Times*

Call it "The Bird Who Knew Too Little." Turkish officials had detained a kestrel on the suspicion that it was an Israeli spy raptor, but they released it this week after an X-ray scan showed no signs of surveillance equipment.

People in the town of Altinayva had discovered the kestrel and were worried by a band on the bird's foot inscribed with "24311 Tel Aviv/Israel." Banding is a common practice in ornithology research, and it allows scientists to track migratory birds' movements. The Lesser Kestrel is a frequent visitor to Israel during its migration between its breeding grounds in south-eastern Europe (including Turkey) and its wintering grounds in Africa.

Nevertheless, suspecting some 'fowl' play, Altinayva residents brought the bird to the local governor. An X-ray scan performed at a local university hospital exonerated the feathered suspect after it failed to detect signs of microchips or listening devices.

This isn't the first time a bird's been accused of being an Israeli agent. Last December, Western Sudanese officials captured a vulture carrying GPS equipment and wearing a device that allowed the bird to broadcast images. The vulture was also tagged with identification reading "Hebrew University, Jerusalem" and "Israel Nature Service." Israeli ecologists said the vulture was part of a study looking at migration patterns. Another tagged vulture was detained in Saudi Arabia in 2011.

While most of the supposed Israeli animal spies have been exonerated, some critters really have been used for espionage. Homing pigeons proved invaluable agents to the Allies in World War II, delivering intelligence on German positions while the U.S. Navy has a squad of trained dolphins that can be used to search for underwater mines and suspicious divers.



The Lesser Kestrel being released after it was cleared of espionage

Voëltuin (Deel 3)

deur Cornie Odendaal

As ouers van klein kindertjies, maak mens mos 'n plan as die klein handjies met 'n skerp mes of ander verbode artikel wil speel. Jy gee iets anders om mee te speel in plaas van om net die mes af te vat en 'n tranelal te veroorsaak (dit werk nie altyd nie, maar mens kan darem probeer). Ons kan dieselfde beginsel toepas as ons beide voëls én vrugte vir menslike gebruik in die tuin wil hê. Gee dus vir die gevelrkte vriende iets anders om te eet in plaas van aarbeie, vye, appelkose, druiwe en perskes – en maak dan maar die vrugte wat jy self wil eet toe. Ek lees in 'n tuinmaakboek 'n tong-in-die-kies happie waarheid dat net voëls en kinders regtig weet hoe vars aarbeie smaak.

Ons land is geseën met 'n ryke verskeidenheid wilde vrugte, en daarmee saam die kleurvolle skare wat daarop leef. Die grootte van vrugte aan inheemse bome is enigiets van skaars groter as 'n speldkoppie tot so groot as 'n ghoen. Die voëls wat die vrugte eet is eweneens van piepklein tot swierige loeries en papegaai. Hoewel dit nie noodwendig so werk dat dit die klein voëltjies is wat die klein vruggies eet, en die groot vrugte aan die groot voëls oorlaat nie, deel ek maar steeds die lysie bome in twee kategorieë: eers klein vruggies en dan medium- tot groot vrugte.

Klein vruggies:

Notsung (*Halleria lucida*), Blinkblaar (*Rhamnus prinoides*), Kruisbessie & Rosyntjiesbos (*Grewia* spp), Klein noemnoem (*Carissa bispinosa*), Blinkblaar-wag-'n-bietjie (*Ziziphus mucronata*), *Deurmekearbos* (*Ehretia rigida*),



Rooipendoring (*Gymnosporia senegalensis*), Karee & Tanibosse (*Searsia* spp; was *Rhus*), Olienhout (*Olea europaea africana*), Witstinkhout (*Celtis africana*), Witbessiebos (*Flueggea virosa*), Swartvoëlbesse (*Psycotria capensis*), Witysterhout (*Veptris lanceolata*), *Katsnorbos* (*Rotheca myricoides*) en Voëlsitboom (*Antidesma venosum*).



Ons wag nou al 'n paar jaar om 'n Boomsitvoël in ons Voëlsitbome te sien, maar hulle staan weerskante van 'n Pendoring waarin 'n menigte voëls baie graag sit, en dus kry die Voëlsitbome nie genoeg aftrek om hul naam gestand te doen nie.

Medium- tot groot vrugte:

Groot noemnoem (*Carissa macrocarpa*), Bosnoemnoem (*Carissa edulis*), Wildepruim (*Harpephyllum caffrum*), Moepel (*Mimusops zeyheri*), Mispel (*Vangueria infausta*), Wildedruif (*Rhoicissus tridentata* en *R.tomentosa*), Waterbessie (*Syzygium cordatum*), *Doppruim* (*Pappea capensis*),



Keiappel (*Dovyalis caffra*), Wildevee (*Ficus* spp), Maroela (*Sclerocarya birrea* ssp *caffra*) en Blinkblaar-wag-'n-bietjie (*Ziziphus mucronata*) wat klein, medium of groot vrugte kan hê.

Terloops: Dit was opvallend, nou die dag toe ons voëls soek daar naby Moletji rond, dat die enigste plekke waar ons tiptolle gesien het, was waar 'n goeie stand van Blinkblaar-wag-'n-bietjies vol vrugte was.



Geniet die tuin vol vrugte en voëls.

Outings / Uitstappies

08 – 11 Aug - GLBR Blouberg & Makgabeng birding adventure

2 - 4 Aug - Atlas Bash Soutpansberge

7 or 21 Sept - Club Ranch Safaris (tbc)

Contact Persons

Contact numbers for enquiries & reservations:
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New Bird Species Found in Central Peru

www.natureworldnews.com

Peter Hosner, a graduate from the Kansas University and a team has published a study describing a new bird species called Junin Tapaculo. The bird was found in the remote Andes Mountains of central Peru.

The tapaculos (ta-pa-COO-lo) are a group of birds found in South and Central America. Highest diversity of the group was found in the Andean region. These birds have short wings and long legs with string feet that they use to scratch the ground. They are brown or gray in color. The birds are mostly identified by their loud ventriloquial calls. When approached, they stick up their tails and scurry for cover.

"We found the Junin Tapaculo in the field by its distinctive voice," Hosner, a doctoral student of ecology and evolutionary biology at KU said in a news release. "I'd spent a lot of time traveling and working with birds in the Andes before I enrolled at KU, and I had never heard anything like it before. We made voice recordings and collected specimens that are needed in all scientific species descriptions. Tapaculos are extremely difficult to identify, so at this point we weren't sure if it was a new species, or if we just happened to record a rarely given vocalization by an already described species."

The study is published in the Wilson Journal of Ornithology and the full article can be viewed at <http://www.natureworldnews.com/articles/3208/20130729/new-bird-species-found-central-peru.htm>

Winter CWAC counts

Richter van Tonder

Ons het CWAC telling gaan doen die naweek van die 26de. Dam een is heeltemal droog en skoon geskraap. So daar was bitter min watervoëls. Dit was ek, Gershwin, Conrad, Marcia, Jody en Anette van Schalkwyk wat daar was.

CWAC 2013 - Winter count 27/07/2013

Hamerkop	-----	4
Gewone Kwikkie	-----	4
Rooipootelsie	-----	4
Skoorsteenveer	-----	10
Driebanstrandkiewiet	-----	10
Bosruiter	-----	1
Swarteend	-----	2
Teeleend	-----	1
Bontkiewiete	-----	9
Koningrooibekkie	-----	3
Grasvoël	-----	1
Kuifkopvisvanger	-----	1
Gewone Vleioerie	-----	2
Kolgans	-----	2
Grootwaterhoender	-----	2
Swartriethaan	-----	20
Grootlangtoon	-----	6
Gewone Nagreier	-----	5
Kaapse Vleisangers	-----	12
Kaapse Rietsanger	-----	13