



# Wakkerstroom Bird Club



*Affiliated to BirdLife South Africa*

*Principal supporter of the Wakkerstroom Junior Bird Clubs*

## **NEWSLETTER NUMBER 75 – April 2020**

Hello fellow Birders, Self-Isolators and Lockdowners,

I do hope you are all staying healthy and looking after yourselves. These are difficult times all around the world, and we are being inundated with news good, bad, hopeful, alarming, and cautionary about “The C Word” ... so I promise that this newsletter will be a C.....v.....-free zone, other than to say please be sensible while you are (hopefully) bird watching wherever you are, and stay well away from others doing the same. Even if just in your own garden is permitted for now ...

Feeding the birds in your own garden can be tremendously rewarding, whether you are putting out seed or fruit for them, or have planted suitable plants they can use in their daily lives as food, shelter and nesting areas – with the added bonus that you don’t have to go anywhere to watch them. Look out for a great challenge for us home-birders, further down in this newsletter.

### **On a Sad Note ...**

We were all saddened by the death of Brenda Guerin, WBC chairman Brian Guerin’s wife, on the 16<sup>th</sup> of March. Always such a cheerful presence at any WBC event, and an ever-enthusiastic cook and baker to keep us nourished, Brenda will be hugely missed for her bubbly personality and enormous kindness and empathy. Our sympathies go to Brian and the whole family.

### **March Vlei Walk, text by Jennifer Russell, photos by Peter Russell**



*Common Moorhen feeding chicks*

A handful of enthusiastic birders gathered on the bridge over the vlei on the Amersfoort road for the monthly vlei “walk” and coffee. Although it was a beautiful, still morning, not many different birds were out, but there were a few satisfactory sightings. The most charming of these was a small family of common moorhens with three newly hatched chicks - both parents played an active role in searching out small invertebrates to feed to their young. Although not seen, the red-chested flufftails were very vocal. Also spotted were otter and mongoose. It is noteworthy that during the latter half of February, two African fish eagles were seen: an adult and an immature. Remember, we meet on the first Saturday on the month at 7h00. Please do join us and visitors are welcome. *Please note that all events, including the vlei walk, are cancelled for April due to the lockdown. Ed)*

Table: Survey checklist: 7 March 2020 in alphabetical order

African Marsh Harrier	Egyptian Goose	Red-chested Flufftail (h)
African Sacred Ibis	Fan-tailed Widow	Red-eyed Dove
African Stonechat	Glossy Ibis	Red-knobbed Coot
African Swamphen	Greater Striped Swallow	Reed Cormorant
African Wattled Lapwing	Grey crowned Crane	South African Cliff Swallow
Black Crake	Hamerkop	South African Shelduck
Black-collared Barbet	Hededa Ibis	Southern Fiscal
Black-headed Heron	Helmeted Guineafowl	Southern Masked Weaver
Blacksmith Lapwing	Hottentot Teal	Southern Red Bishop
Black-winged Kite	Laughing Dove	Speckled Mousebird
Bokmakierie	Lesser Swamp Warbler	Swainson's Spurfowl
Brown-throated Martin	Levaillant's Cisticola	Three-banded Plover
Cape Canary	Little Bittern	Village Weaver
Cape Robin-chat	Little Grebe	Western Cattle Egret
Cape Shoveler	Little Rush Warbler	Whiskered Tern
Cape Turtle Dove	Little Stint	White-rumped Swift
Cape Wagtail	Long-tailed Widowbird	White-throated Swallow
Common Moorhen	Purple Heron	Yellow-billed Duck
Common Starling	Red-billed Quelea	

= Migrant spp

h = heard only



*South African Shelduck, coming in to land*



*The always-popular Cape Wagtail*

## Bird Of The Year Material

The following was sent by BirdLife South Africa CEO Mark Anderson:

“The Bird of the Year 2020 (Southern Ground-Hornbill) posters have been printed and arrived at Isdell House last week (*early March. Ed*). We have extra copies, so please let Kathleen (at [reception@birdlife.org.za](mailto:reception@birdlife.org.za)) know if you’d like her to mail you a few copies. (*Kristi Garland at the BirdLife Wakkerstroom Centre also has posters available. Ed*)

Posters have also been included in each copy of African Birdlife magazine. If you are not going to use the poster you receive with your magazine, please consider donating it to a school, library, church, cub group, etc.

The other Bird of the Year materials that we have produced/are producing are:

- Fluffies (available from Shireen at [membership@birdlife.org.za](mailto:membership@birdlife.org.za)) (*also from Kristi at R150 each. Ed*)
- Pin badges (available from Shireen at [membership@birdlife.org.za](mailto:membership@birdlife.org.za)) (*also from Kristi, at R30 each. Ed*)
- T-shirts (will be available soon)
- Articles in each issue of African Birdlife magazine.

Importantly, Caitlin Judge is developing fantastic learning resources. These are available for download from [www.birdlife.org.za](http://www.birdlife.org.za) and they are also posted on our Facebook Page and Group.

We are very grateful for the funding from Hans Hoheisen Charitable Trust for Bird of the Year.”

*The learning resources might keep your kids entertained while schools are closed! Ed*



## **How to identify a bird in 5 steps by Jaymi Heimbuch**

*This is an article from the USA so the birds won't be familiar to us – but the same principles apply anywhere.*



*Asking a few questions in the right order can help you quickly identify a bird species in your field guide, like this Magnolia warbler. (Photo: Agami Photo Agency/Shutterstock)*

Identifying a bird can be a challenge, even for experienced birders. And if you're new to using field guides, it can be daunting to figure out where to even begin searching in the hundreds of pages of species.

There's a great technique for making positive identifications. It's all about knowing what to look for and in what order. Keep this checklist handy and follow it in order, and you'll be able to name that mystery bird!

### **1. Size**



*It's easy to confuse this mountain bluebird with an eastern bluebird or a western bluebird. (Photo: Steve Byland/Shutterstock)*

The first and easiest place to start is size. Look at the bird and compare it to the size of species you're familiar with. Is the bird smaller than a sparrow, about the size of a pigeon, bigger than a goose?

If you're still unsure about the bird's size, look for an object near the bird you can use for comparison. For instance, if the bird is near something like a rock, a sign or a flower, you can go measure that object and get a rough idea of the size of the bird.

## 2. Overall shape



*The overall shape of the bird can help you narrow down where to look in your field guide. Note the shape of the bird's bill, wings, body and legs. (Photo: Ekaterina Kupeeva/Shutterstock)*

Look at the silhouette of the bird and compare this to species you know. Is it shaped like a robin, a heron, a duck, an owl? The overall shape of the bird can go a long way in narrowing down which section to look through in your field guide.

Next, look at the details of bird's shape. Zoom in on the shape of bill, wings, body, tail and legs. Again, it can be easier to notice and remember details if you compare these aspects of the bird you're looking at to the bird species you already know.

Is the tail long or short compared to the body? Are the legs long or short, slender or sturdy? Is the bill bulbous like a cardinal, thin like a hummingbird, hooked like a hawk or flat like a duck?

## 3. General behaviour



*If the bird is eating, can you tell what it's eating — seeds, insects, nectar, plants or worms? Take note if it's feeding on the ground or in the water. (Photo: tee262/Shutterstock)*

Where the bird is located in a habitat and what it is doing can reveal information to help narrow down the species possibilities. Some of the questions about general behaviour to ask include:

- Is the bird in a flock or solitary?
- Is it staying close to brushy cover or is it out in the open?
- If it is in a tree, is it staying high in the canopy or lower in the branches?
- If it is eating, can you tell if it is eating seeds, insects, nectar, plants or something else? Is it feeding on the ground or in water?

Notice everything you can about what the bird is doing because these subtle details will help distinguish the general category of bird and perhaps between species that look very similar but act differently.

#### 4. Habitat and range



*Narrow down the type of bird species by noting the habitat type. This rare Steller's sea eagle prefers coastal areas and wouldn't be found in a grassy plain. (Photo: Ondrej Prosicky/Shutterstock)*

Next, you can rapidly rule out possible species by noting the habitat type and considering the range of the species.

What kind of place is this bird in? Is it a grassy plain, a marsh, a conifer forest or an oak woodland? A desert-adapted roadrunner is unlikely to be hanging out on a beach, just as a great blue heron is unlikely to be found on a mountain top.

The habitat type is equally helpful with subtle differences between species, too. Let's say there are two sparrows that both look like they could be your bird, but one is found in an arid habitat and the other is found only in forested habitats.

Now let's say both of the two candidate sparrow species are found in conifer forest. You can narrow it down based on the range of the species. Is the conifer forest in the upper Midwest or along the West Coast? You can exclude candidate species that are very rarely or never found in the area where you're birding.

## 5. Colour and field markings



*Birders use the term LBJ, which stands for little brown job, to describe so many little brown sparrow species. (Photo: NOAspb/Shutterstock)*

Colour comes last because many bird species have differently coloured plumage based on sex, age, season and other factors. The very same male bird might look completely different in April when he has his colourful breeding plumage versus November when he's wearing his winter plumage.

Did you know bald eagles don't get their signature black body and white head until they're around seven years old? It can be easy to mistake a juvenile bald eagle in its mottled brown plumage for a somewhat similarly coloured golden eagle — yet size, wing shape and habitat helps distinguish them.

Some bird species can look incredibly similar to one another. There's a reason why birders use the term LBJ, which stands for little brown job, to describe so many little brown species! Only the most subtle differences in markings — such as a pale grey versus a white marking near the eye — might distinguish two species from one another. That's why noticing other identifying characteristics first is critical, and noting colour details will assist in finalizing a positive ID on a bird.



*If you need additional clues to determine the species, try listening to its song or other vocalizations. (Photo: Benjamin Jacobs-Schwartz/Shutterstock)*

With the five checklist items above, you'll know where to begin to look in a field guide and how to pick out your species among similar species. However, if you need additional clues, you can include:

- Listening to its song or other vocalizations
- Watching its flight pattern — how it flaps its wings and manoeuvres in flight
- Watching its flight silhouette — its overall shape in flight

These extra clues can feel difficult to learn at first but become much easier with experience — and can be your best tool for distant birds.

Reference: [https://www.mnn.com/earth-matters/animals/stories/how-identify-bird-5-steps?utm\\_source=Weekly+Newsletter&utm\\_campaign=6d9cc1ba9d-RSS\\_EMAIL\\_CAMPAIGN\\_WED0318\\_2020&utm\\_medium=email&utm\\_term=0\\_fcbff2e256-6d9cc1ba9d-41887277](https://www.mnn.com/earth-matters/animals/stories/how-identify-bird-5-steps?utm_source=Weekly+Newsletter&utm_campaign=6d9cc1ba9d-RSS_EMAIL_CAMPAIGN_WED0318_2020&utm_medium=email&utm_term=0_fcbff2e256-6d9cc1ba9d-41887277)

### **A Chance to Win a Birding Trip to Brazil!**

*I nicked this off the BirdLife South Africa website ([www.birdlife.org.za/jackpot-birding](http://www.birdlife.org.za/jackpot-birding)) because it's such a fantastic opportunity to win an unforgettable prize, and I just had to share it with you 😊 If you have R500 to spare for a ticket, give it a go! With only 1000 tickets on sale, you have far better odds than in most other competitions.*

#### **Jackpot Birding**

Come with us to Mata Atlantica! A land of high coastal mountains speaks to the sky in ancient mist; sloths dance with moths in purple shade and glittering hummingbirds capture the sun. A mythical jungle sways between the softest grasslands in the language of the samba. Near giant leaves, bromeliads, orchids and vines every creature waits in the brightest colours of Brazil. Greeted by the most unique birds on earth you will fall in love with a gentle wilderness of everlasting memories shaped by the rarest of the rare.

BirdLife South Africa is offering you the chance to win an 8-day Atlantic Coastal Forest Tour to Brazil with Rockjumper Worldwide Birding Adventures for two people sharing, including return flights from Johannesburg to Rio de Janeiro.



*Brassy-breasted Tanager; photo by Adam Riley*

## Tour Facts

**Top Birds:** Three-toed Jacamar, Swallow-tailed Cotinga, Saffron Toucanet, Green-crowned Plovercrest, Saw-billed Hermit, Black-billed Scythebill, Giant, Large-tailed, Tufted, Spot-backed & White-bearded Antshrike, Blond-crested and Yellow eared Woodpecker, Grey-winged & Black-and-gold Cotinga, Brazilian, Green-headed, Red-necked, Olive-green, Brassy-breasted, Gilt-edged, Azure-shouldered, Rufous-headed, Diademed, Fawn-breasted and Golden-chevrons Tanager, Brazilian Laniisoma, Dusky-legged Guan, Blue-bellied Parrot, Sharpbill, Serra do Mar Tyrant-Manakin, Pin-tailed Manakin, Hooded Berryeater, Bare-throated Bellbird, Serra do Mar Tyrannulet, Mouse-colored and White-breasted Tapaculo, Spotted Bamboowren, Slaty Bristlefront, Black-cheeked Gnateater, Variegated Antpitta, Cryptic and Rufous-tailed Antthrush, White-bibbed Antbird, Spot-breasted Antwreio, Sharp-billed & Pale-browed Treehunter, White-collared Foliage-gleaner, Orange-eyed Thornbird, Itatiaia Spinetail, Plain and Maroon-bellied Parakeet, Buff-bellied Puffbird, Surucua Trogon, Brazilian Ruby, Black Jacobin, Slaty-breasted Wood Rail, Spot-winged Wood Quail and Red-legged Seriema

**Top Mammals:** Brown Howler Monkey, Black Capuchin, Guianan Squirrel

**Habitats Covered:** Rainforest trails, grasslands, Cerrado woodlands, rivers and wetlands

**Expected Climate:** Warm to hot and humid

**Max Group Size:** 8 with 1 local birding leader

**Tour Pace & Walking:** Relaxed pace, undemanding walks, short drives

**Accommodation:** Comfortable lodge

**Ease of Birding:** Easy

**Number of Species Expected:** 250+

**Other Attractions:** Hummingbird feeders and bird fruit trays at the lodge

**Photographic Opportunities:** Excellent

Go to [www.birdlife.org.za/jackpot-birding](http://www.birdlife.org.za/jackpot-birding) to view the full tour itinerary, as well as Terms and Conditions.

This is an incredible prize and, for only R500 a ticket, you stand a chance of winning it. There are only 1000 tickets available which means that they're going to go fast! All funds raised will go directly to BirdLife South Africa and its important conservation work.

Entries close at midnight on 12 July 2020, or when all tickets have been sold; whichever comes first. The draw will take place on 15 July 2020 at Isdell House, BirdLife South Africa's head office in Dunkeld West.

Please note that the winner is responsible for organising and paying for the necessary visas if applicable.

Registered with the National Lotteries Commission (NLC) 00293/02

Contact Emma Askes for more information on [emma.askses@birdlife.org.za](mailto:emma.askses@birdlife.org.za) or 011 789 1122.

*There is also an easy-to-fill-out competition entry form on the webpage. Ed*

## The State of Our Birds

BirdLife South Africa recently published the first-ever *State of South African Birds* report. It makes for very interesting reading. You can download the Pdf version of the 41-page report here <https://www.birdlife.org.za/wp-content/uploads/2018/04/State-of-South-Africas-Birds-Report-2018-1.pdf>

## CAR COUNT AUTUMN 2020 CANCELLED .... BUT THERE'S GOOD NEWS!

As the near future is rather unpredictable at the moment, it was decided to cancel the CAR Autumn count which was to have taken place on 18 April. However, Kristi Garland has put her thinking cap on about how to keep us all entertained .... So we introduce .....



### COVID-19 GOT YOU DOWN?

### WHY NOT JOIN OUR 'LOCK DOWN' BIRDING CHALLENGE?

**MIDNIGHT 26<sup>TH</sup> MARCH – MIDNIGHT 16<sup>TH</sup> APRIL 2020**

Not being able to get out there birding may put some of us into a decline but fear not! Many of us have a relatively large garden and lots of flowering indigenous plants, so it may be a good time to see what is going on in your own garden!

For the next 21 days, the Wakkerstroom Bird Club with support from the BirdLife South Africa Wakkerstroom Centre, will run a 'Lock Down' challenge. This is open to everyone wanting to participate, as long as they reside in Wakkerstroom or the surrounds. All you need to do is spend time in your garden, watching the birds come and go. Send your sightings to Kristi Garland either via WhatsApp or sms on 081 726 5282 or email [kristi.garland@birdlife.org.za](mailto:kristi.garland@birdlife.org.za). A list will be kept of all the species, who saw it first and where in Wakkerstroom and you will receive updates every Saturday! Sightings need to be with me by 17h00 each day. *Please don't send one sighting at a time ☺*.

Information required when submitting your sighting:

- Your name and surname
- Date
- Where did you see the bird? A street or road name is good
- What bird/s you saw and numbers. Please note if it was flying over your garden with a "FO" (*ummm...? Ed*)
- Anything else worth mentioning

So, your submitted information would look like this:

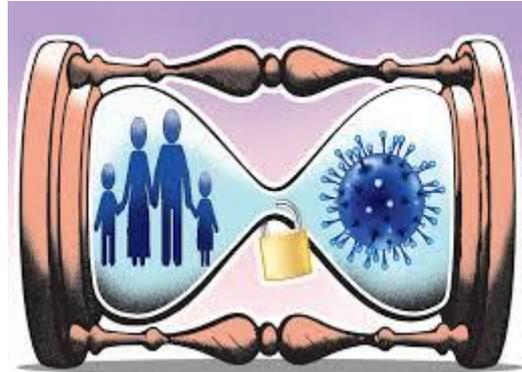
Kristi Garland, 24<sup>th</sup> March, Plot 87 (BLSA), Pied Starling x2, Red-winged Starling x5, Hadedda Ibis x3, Egyptian Goose x2 FO, etc. Special sightings: Secretarybird x1 in the surrounding grassland

Before you get going, here are some rules:

- For this to work you can only log birds seen or heard in your garden for the period of the lock down. Interesting sightings seen elsewhere or outside your garden can be submitted but will not count toward your final count.
- You can log birds seen or heard while standing in your garden, including flyovers or birds you can see in your neighbour's garden. This will help people with small gardens to get a decent list. So, look up, look for swifts and bee-eaters!
- Please be fair, if you live on a farm or large property, define your garden to an area around your home. If you live in a flat, the whole garden around the flat is in play.

- Most importantly, have fun! If you see something interesting, please send a description or photograph. Photographs of your garden are welcome too. This is also an opportunity to watch bird behaviour. Let us know if something really special happens.

If you need a little more support or have any questions, please contact Kristi – details above. Let's make this lockdown a little more interesting and fun, before we all lose our marbles.



Thanks Kristi, that should prove a lot of fun, and the whole family can get involved. Well maybe not the cat .....

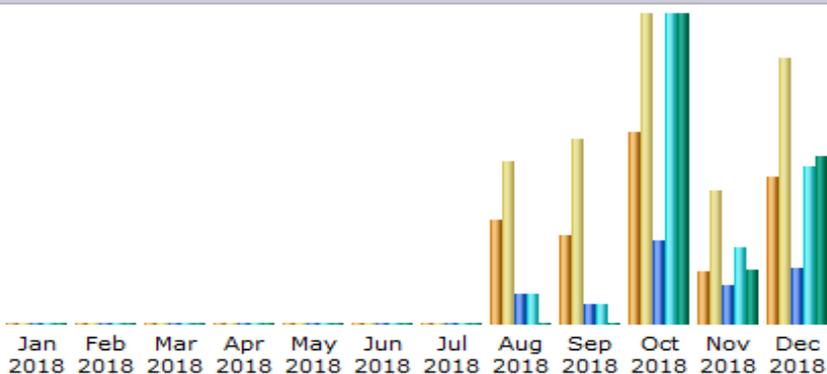
(And yes I know she used the C.....V.... word, but let's forgive her!)



## WBC Webpage

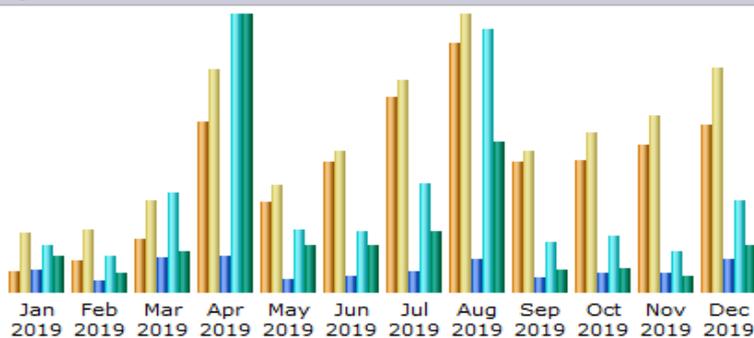
Graham Spencer and Jane Harley have recently put together some stats on the activities on the Club's webpage [www.wakkerstroombirdclub.org.za](http://www.wakkerstroombirdclub.org.za) which looks like it's getting very popular:

### Monthly history



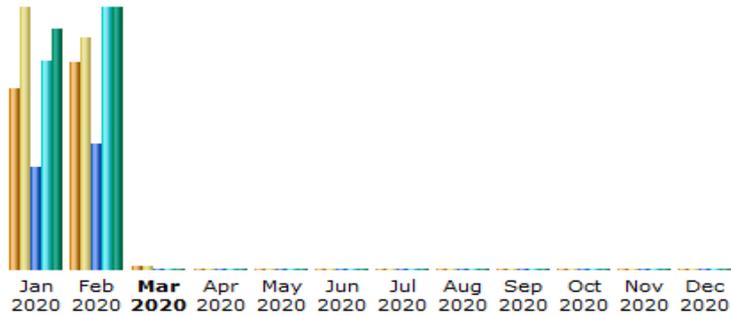
Month	Unique visitors	Number of visits	Pages	Hits	Bandwidth
Jan 2018	0	0	0	0	0
Feb 2018	0	0	0	0	0
Mar 2018	0	0	0	0	0
Apr 2018	0	0	0	0	0
May 2018	0	0	0	0	0
Jun 2018	0	0	0	0	0
Jul 2018	0	0	0	0	0
Aug 2018	14	22	39	39	45.60 KB
Sep 2018	12	25	25	25	15.21 KB
Oct 2018	26	42	108	399	24.06 MB
Nov 2018	7	18	49	98	4.18 MB
Dec 2018	20	36	71	203	13.04 MB
<b>Total</b>	<b>79</b>	<b>143</b>	<b>292</b>	<b>764</b>	<b>41.34 MB</b>

### Monthly history



Month	Unique visitors	Number of visits	Pages	Hits	Bandwidth
Jan 2019	15	42	187	382	45.58 MB
Feb 2019	22	44	100	302	24.34 MB
Mar 2019	37	64	283	808	50.37 MB
Apr 2019	120	157	292	2,269	342.46 MB
May 2019	63	75	111	507	57.90 MB
Jun 2019	91	99	137	500	57.78 MB
Jul 2019	137	149	173	888	75.46 MB
Aug 2019	175	195	266	2,153	185.77 MB
Sep 2019	92	99	116	405	27.57 MB
Oct 2019	93	112	162	461	29.62 MB
Nov 2019	103	124	152	332	20.88 MB
Dec 2019	117	158	265	745	58.61 MB
<b>Total</b>	<b>1,065</b>	<b>1,318</b>	<b>2,244</b>	<b>9,752</b>	<b>976.32 MB</b>

## Monthly history



Month	Unique visitors	Number of visits	Pages	Hits	Bandwidth
Jan 2020	86	124	196	398	26.82 MB
Feb 2020	98	110	240	498	29.10 MB
<b>Mar 2020</b>	2	2	2	2	51.79 KB
Apr 2020	0	0	0	0	0
May 2020	0	0	0	0	0
Jun 2020	0	0	0	0	0
Jul 2020	0	0	0	0	0
Aug 2020	0	0	0	0	0
Sep 2020	0	0	0	0	0
Oct 2020	0	0	0	0	0
Nov 2020	0	0	0	0	0
Dec 2020	0	0	0	0	0
<b>Total</b>	<b>186</b>	<b>236</b>	<b>438</b>	<b>898</b>	<b>55.97 MB</b>

## WBC Events for April

For now we have had to clear our diaries of planned events ... should the situation improve in the latter part of the month, we will of course let you know. Fortunately there is the Lockdown Challenge!!

## Collective Nouns For Birds



**Power line peril for terrestrial birds in South Africa** *Saturday Star, 3 August 2019, by Sheree Bega*

*This article was published a few months ago, but I thought it of interest .....*

The death of another Secretary Bird in a collision with overhead electric cables is further evidence of the “perilous” world facing South Africa’s birds of prey.

In a tracking project by BirdLife South Africa since 2011, eight out of 13 young Secretary Birds have perished, several after colliding with power lines and fences.

“This highlights a scary reality that recruitment of young birds into the breeding population is very low and could spell future disaster for South Africa’s secretary bird population if urgent steps are not taken,” said Dr Melissa Howes-Whitecross, the acting terrestrial bird conservation programme manager and raptors and large terrestrial birds project manager at BirdLife South Africa.

Kwezi, a 6-month-old secretary bird, was tagged in February as part of a secretary bird conservation project on a farm near Besters in KwaZulu-Natal. In February, Kwezi was fitted with a tracking device at the age of around 8 weeks. “She showed the typical developmental pattern of the previously studied secretary birds, exploring the environment around her natal nest in ever increasing distances,” said Howes-Whitecross. On July 23, Kwezi set off on her first major dispersal flight away from her nest and by July 25, she had travelled approximately 26km from her natal nest. Dispersal means that a young bird is capable of fending for itself.

“Unfortunately, she would travel no further after she collided with the overhead cables of a large electrical transmission line.”

BirdLife SA selected the Secretary Bird as its Bird of the Year for 2019 and has been trying to profile the conservation concerns facing these charismatic, long-legged birds who are apex predators in the open grasslands and savannahs of sub-Saharan Africa.

“Southern Africa’s Secretary Bird population is in trouble and urgent steps need to be taken to ensure that these regal birds which stride across the African grasslands do not become another statistic of lost biodiversity in the ever increasing global crisis,” it said.

Recent studies have shown declines of between 70%-80% of Secretary Birds across southern Africa.

The tracking project started in 2011, after which 10 juvenile secretary birds were fitted with lightweight solar-powered, GPS-GSM telemetry devices between 2012 and 2014. Over 45900 location points were collected and the “groundbreaking” findings have improved the understanding of the movements, dispersal and survival of juvenile secretary birds.



“Unfortunately, a darker side of the telemetry study has been the reports of mortalities of several of the young tracked birds,” said BirdLife SA. “Fences and power lines are a considerable threat to young raptors and large terrestrial birds, in particular secretary birds.”

Ernst Retief, who previously co-headed the tracking project, and who is working to understand and mitigate the impacts of fences on wildlife, said: “It’s likely we’re vastly underestimating the detrimental impacts infrastructure such as fences and electrical cables are having on our terrestrial birds.”

Howes-Whitecross, who took over co-ordination of the project in 2018, has since fitted telemetry devices to three additional juvenile Secretary Birds, two of which have already been lost to collisions with high-voltage electrical cables, including Kwezi.

Tambo, a young Secretary Bird rescued from the edge of the OR Tambo International Airport runway after suffering from a severe foot infection, was rehabilitated by the Johannesburg Wildlife Veterinary Hospital for four months and released in the grasslands of Devon, Gauteng. He died after colliding with electrical infrastructure just four weeks after being released in October last year.

BirdLife SA has reported Kwezi’s collision incident to Eskom and the Endangered Wildlife Trust.

“Kwezi’s death will hopefully result in the marking of the power line, to prevent further mortalities. The attachment of bird flight diverters will increase the visibility of the lines and deter birds from colliding with them in future.”



Secretary birds, other raptors and large terrestrial birds are already under pressure from high levels of habitat loss across the region.

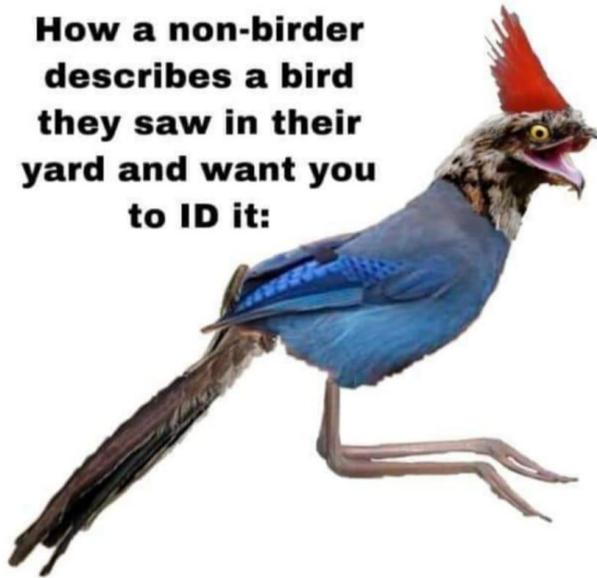
“This, coupled with the high mortality rates of young secretary birds, is a concerning factor when considering their long-term survival and conservation,” said Howes-Whitecross. “If young birds are not making it successfully into the breeding population we will see the knock-on impacts of this with a future population crash.”

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Hopefully that’s kept you busy for a good while! A couple of smiles to follow, courtesy Kristi Garland, but from my side I can only say stay safe, stay healthy, stay informed. And keep birding!

Chris

**How a non-birder describes a bird they saw in their yard and want you to ID it:**



**What they actually saw:**

