



Wakkerstroom Bird Club

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NEWSLETTER NUMBER 29– DECEMBER 2014

Annual Function Saturday 6 December.



Elize and John McAllister and Yvonne Clulow

Our Annual Do, at the beautiful Forellenhof, was attended by almost 30 people on a threatening summer storm afternoon, the threats later carried out in spades! Journeys back to town along the flooded roads appear to have gone uneventfully, fortunately

Our hosts Ronelle and Johan van Eeden rose to the occasion again, fires were lit and a good time was had by all! Many thanks to them.

The occasion was again graced by the presence of our three Honorary Life Members, see picture.

Brian Guerin presented the van Eedens with a small gift and thanked the members for their support during the year and expressed the hope that this support would continue in the coming years.

On a Sombre Note.

We have had instances reported of loitering on the Amersfoort Bridge, the Picnic Area parking and, perhaps even in the Hides overnight. One of our Committee members has approached the Police and received excellent co-operation and an undertaking from them to give more attention to the area.

Should you notice this happening or feel intimidated in any way the Police have given us Cell Number 072 215 0240 which is carried in their patrol car and should elicit a prompt response. This number should be carried by all birders, dog walker etc., particularly those who are on their own.

I have just returned from the Lowveld where the fifth armed robbery this year was reported to have occurred in the Lowveld Botanic Gardens. This is a popular birding venue where I spent many pleasant hours during the first Atlas project and a subsequent two-year Survey of the birds of Nelspruit. Similar occurrences have also been reported from other birding venues in South Africa – be alert!

PLEASE CARRY THIS CELL NUMBER WITH YOU AT ALL TIMES – WE DO NOT NEED SIMILAR INCIDENTS IN WAKKERSTROOM!

January Diary.

Saturday 3 January – Vlei Walk – let's start the year with a flourish!

Tuesday 13 January – Outing – a special beginning to 2015! We will visit B P Greyling's farm, directions to follow. We will leave the Library at 07h00 sharp as Karen Greyling is providing breakfast (!) at 08h00 for those attending. We would like an idea of numbers so please let me know if you would like to join in.

Weekend of 16-18 January – SANParks Honorary Rangers, Newcastle Branch is holding the first Birding Weekend. Their programme is not available at this point, there will be a Vlei Market on Saturday as well. Some 60 visitors have booked already and we will need some volunteers to man birding points. Please help!

Wednesday 21 January – talk by Peter Nelson of Ladysmith Bird Club. He will talk about the development of Ingula Nature Reserve, and discuss the complexities of building a power station in a sensitive ecological area. He will focus on the impact on the natural environment and the bird life they found in the area.

Two Changes:

1. Firstly, due to a communication problem with the method of entering the Sandy Twomey Photographic Competition, we have decided to extend the closing date to 14 January, 2015 to co-incide with the Sanparks Birding Weekend. Winners will be announced on that day. The flow of entries, too, has been disappointing.....so now you have time to get your 3 entries in!
2. Secondly, although the proceeds to date are most satisfactory we have decided to postpone the draw for the Trailer Competition to the same date. Further estimates of the cost of even a small trailer will require extra funds and we feel that selling tickets at the Christmas Market and the Birding Weekend will be of great assistance.

We regret the necessity for these changes and hope they are not inconvenient to members.

And finally – the Committee wishes each and every one of you a Blessed Christmas and a happy, prosperous and birding-filled New Year!

John Barrow. - EDITOR