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The Avian Demography Unit is conducting the Coordinated Avifaunal Roadcounts in partnership with BirdLife South Africa.

The Tony and Lisette Lewis
Foundation South Africa



COORDINATED AVIFAUNAL ROADCOUNTS (CAR)

Newsletter 17

December 2004

General

This is the fifteenth newsletter and it is incredible to consider the volume of information that you are collectively gathering! In the article 'ADU celebrates 10+ years of bird monitoring' in the enclosed *Bird Numbers* you will see that CAR observers have covered about 244 400 km on CAR routes in the past 11 years. The Karoo Large Terrestrial Bird Survey will be conducting their 20th count in January. This survey was initiated by Mark Anderson, of Northern Cape Department of Tourism, Environment & Conservation, and the Platberg-Karoo Conservancy in July 1995 and we are grateful that they contribute their information to CAR.

In the Biodiversity Act passed this year, the Minister is given the task of ensuring that monitoring of all species occurs and CAR is helping to meet this daunting challenge. As I mentioned in the 'CAR: Winter 2004 count' report (dated 23 September on the 'What is new' page of the website), we plan to put annual updates of trends for all species on our website. This will facilitate prompt feedback of results to you, landowners and conservation agencies. The updated trends of Blue Crane in the Overberg and Swartland appear if you click on 'Research', then 'Coordinated Avifaunal Roadcounts' and then 'Blue Crane' in the Table at the foot of the CAR webpage.

The winter count on 31 July certainly presented a challenge for many of you with icy cold weather, mud, or even snow in parts! Thank you for persevering. We had much needed heavy rain in the Western Cape shortly before the count. The Humansdorp routes were rescheduled for Monday due to rain and the Swartberg routes in KZN were counted a day late due to impassable snowy conditions.

New information

I have enclosed a **leaflet** that you can hand out to any interested members of the public who stop to inquire what you are up to. I hope this will be particularly helpful for farmers who are sometimes justifiably concerned about strangers scanning their farmlands. Do please be careful not to trespass. Your Precinct Organiser has extra copies but you can download pdf files of all forms from the foot of the CAR webpage.

Daan Müller, of the Free State Department of Tourism, Environment and Economic Affairs, has kindly translated this leaflet and Information Sheet No. 1 into Afrikaans. Do let me know if you would like a copy.

I have also enclosed a **route description form**. I hope your heart doesn't sink! Most of you filled in this form in January 2000. It is time for an update so that any changes on your route are on record, particularly as this kind of information is vital in interpreting trends. The route description forms are also available from the CAR webpage, so do fill one in **whenever you notice changes** or make a well-marked note on your roadcount form.

Another thing I kindly request you to do is to **send in a photocopy of your route map**, with start and end clearly marked, so that I can confirm that the route you are following is correct and up to date. This is vitally important because CAR statistics are based on a set of fixed routes of known location and length.

There are no changes to the **CAR 10 roadcount**

form. Please only use a CAR 10 form. Thank you for filling in the 'Relevant features nearby' column more appropriately. Please check through this section on Information Sheet No. 4, as some of you are still putting 'road' or 'fence' which we do not capture. Also, some of you are forgetting to fill in the farm number for cranes and bustards; if you have mislaid your route map please request one from me or your Precinct Organiser. Do try to have at least two people per car, as more eyes are an advantage.

Remember to check that you have filled in all the information at the top of the CAR roadcount form. I do appreciate your returning the forms much more promptly, as I can then email you about queries when there is a chance that you will remember!

Robert's 7 is still in preparation and we have decided not to change any names until they are finalised and in print. Where there is sufficient space I have included the old name and the proposed new name.

Wildlife and Environment Society of South Africa (WESSA) Presidents' Award to ADU . . . and to you!

*We, the members
of the Wildlife and Environment Society of South Africa
recognise the Avian Demography Unit
for their exceptional and sustained
contribution to ornithology, particularly
the understanding of bird populations in southern Africa,
and through these efforts, their contribution
to the conservation of various species.
Through their numerous specialist projects,
publications and the participation of
large groups of volunteers, they promote
participation in conservation actions.*

This was the inscription on the award presented to the ADU at a ceremony in Kimberley celebrating partnerships and efforts to conserve the environment. The following appeared in a press release which appears in full on the 'What is new' webpage, dated 27 September:

'The conservation of African Penguins, White Storks, frogs and other species, as well as coordinating the efforts of thousands of volunteers through atlas programmes run by the Avian Demography Unit, based at the University of Cape Town, formed the basis of a President's Special Award to the ADU. The award recognized the role that the unit has played in involving volunteers in conservation actions. "I am delighted that the award was made to the ADU, as our successes are really a team effort", said Professor Les Underhill, head of the ADU.'

Without your participation none of these projects would be possible, so a **BIG THANK YOU** to you all!

Date of summer CAR count

The date set for the summer count is **Saturday, 29 January 2005**. As usual, make every effort to do the count on the specified date, starting 1-2 hours after sunrise. If for some last-minute, unavoidable reason you are unable to count on this date, please let your Precinct Organiser know



and do it on the nearest possible day. The next winter count will be on Saturday, 30 July 2005.

Conservation of biodiversity

In a recent press release from BirdLife South Africa, Dr Gerhard Verdoorn stated that 'Scientists, conservationists, business and governments need to implement pro-active conservation measures to prevent any further decline of the world's biodiversity. More than 15 000 species of plants and animals are facing global extinction.'

Dr Stuart Butchart, Global Species Officer for BirdLife International, wrote:

'... Birds remain the best documented class of organisms on the Red List. Their continued decline is indicative of the perilous state of the planet's biodiversity.

'In 1996 it was revealed that one in eight birds (12%) and one in four mammals (23%) were threatened with extinction (falling into the Critically Endangered, Endangered or Vulnerable categories). The new figures show that one in three amphibians (32%) are globally threatened. The catastrophic decline of amphibians is a worrying indicator of the state of the planet's freshwater resources.

'Humans, either directly or indirectly, are the main reason for most declines. Habitat destruction and degradation are the leading threats, but other significant pressures include introduced species, pollution, disease and over-exploitation for food, the pet trade, and medicine. Climate change is also increasingly being recognised as a serious threat.

'Threatened species are often concentrated in densely populated areas, particularly in much of Asia and parts of Africa. A major conservation challenge will therefore be to reconcile the demands of large numbers of people on the environment, whilst protecting the biodiversity upon which so many people's livelihoods depend.'

I was encouraged, when I attended the Cape Times Caltex Environmental Awards function, by the wide range of projects involved in conservation action. Ms Tasneem Essop, our Western Cape Minister of Environmental Affairs and Tourism, reminded us of the Native American quote which I put in the previous newsletter: 'We do not inherit the earth from our ancestors, we borrow it from our children'. In a similar vein, in *Towards Gondwana Alive* Nelson Mandela wrote: 'If we give our very best to all the children of today, and if we pass on our planet in the fullness of her beauty and natural richness, we will be serving the children of the future.' Thank you for your CAR counts that play a significant part in this effort to conserve our environment for our children.

Stanley's/Denham's Bustard and Ludwig's Bustard identification

These two species are similar and it is very important to check for the distinguishing features on Information Sheet No. 3, especially in areas where both species occur. Another feature to note is that Stanley's Bustard has a very quiet display (only audible from very nearby), while Ludwig's Bustard 'booms' loudly while displaying. I saw a Stanley's displaying recently and was amazed at how strikingly white the puffed, balloon-like throat was. Ludwig's also puffs out the throat but from the front a brown diamond shape is distinctive.

Thank you, David Allan, for clarifying these distinctions.

ADU Observer numbers

If those who assist you regularly would like to receive an ADU number and be on the mailing list, do include their name, title, initials and postal and email address details on a separate piece of paper.

CAR Report

The eight-year CAR report is still available if you know of anyone who would find it useful, do contact the ADU or order through our web page. The cost (including postage) is R150.

CAR support

I have been most concerned about the funding situation for CAR, as we still have a funding shortfall of R60 000 for 2004. If you have any contacts in companies, do let me know, as I can forward the latest Annual Report and Project Proposal. The webpage is also

informative. We would also like to find sponsorship for a booklet for the public highlighting results from the eight-year report.

Thank you to Yvonne Craig for writing an article entitled 'Nation-wide terrestrial bird count' in their local paper, *Our Times*, and to Alison Richardson, Pieter du Plessis, Shirley Bennett, Jenny Gon, Pat Hulley and Lorraine Mullins for reports on their counts in their respective Bird Club Newsletters. I appreciated Ken Gordon requesting an article for a new paper for the agricultural community in northern KZN, *Northern Natal Farmer*. Tim Wood also suggested a report on CAR for the KZN Bird Club's *KZN News*. Thank you to Don Pinnock who highlighted CAR in his article on cranes in the July *Getaway*. If there are other reports that I am unaware of, please send me a copy to include in the annual report.

Conservation Farming Project

I mentioned this project in a previous newsletter. Visit the website, www.nbi.ac.za, click on 'Research', then 'Conservation Farming' for information about the project outcomes.

Ringed cranes

Ringed cranes were seen on SW13, OV04, OV08, OV17 and OV18. Do look out for **colour-ringed cranes at all times of year**, as well as during the CAR count.

Roosts

If you are aware of roosts, particularly of threatened species, do let us know. Marius Wheeler, who coordinates CWAC (Coordinated Waterbird Counts), is particularly interested in reports of significant roosts or breeding sites for waterbirds throughout the country (mwheeler@adu.uct.ac.za, 021-650 4698).

Dead birds reported

J. Lieffrig and E. Beemster-Boer saw a Whitequilled Korhaan fly into electrical lines while counting FS54; it was killed immediately. On OV20, Patricia Reynolds reported a Blue Crane found under a powerline. Pierre van den Berg found a female Black Korhaan road casualty on OV16.

Ground Hornbill Working Group

Endangered Wildlife Trust launched this Working Group recently. Kerry Morrison is manager and is interested in any information about Ground Hornbills. Do send in sightings at any time of year. As it happens, James identified the need to investigate the possibility of routes in the Kruger at a planning meeting we had earlier this year, to provide comparison with agricultural areas and also to monitor the savannah biome. If you know of birders in the area who may like to set up CAR routes, do let me know.

Thank you

Whenever the petrol price increases, I think of you all and am so grateful for the generous way in which you cover long distances for CAR. Thank you to all Precinct Organisers for efficiently organizing counts, especially as some had to be rescheduled due to the wintry weather. Linda Tsipa spent many hours systematically capturing all the winter data and I appreciated her help with editing these tables. I also find James Harrison's editing most helpful and Marja Wren-Sargent has again successfully completed the tricky task of typesetting this newsletter. If you did not receive an email about the CAR winter count report on the web, do let me know as your address is obviously not on my email distribution list.

All the best for the summer count and in all that 2005 holds for you.

*Donella Young,
Project Coordinator*

Mistakes and misprints

Please carefully check the figures given for your route in this newsletter against your records, and report any discrepancies so that we can correct the database. There was an error in the Eastern Cape table in Newsletter 16: EG02 counted by Bo Bonnevie should read EG03!

Results

In the tables, three numbers may appear, e.g., 15/5/2 = 15 adults, 5 juveniles and 2 chicks; or two numbers, e.g., 20//1 = 20 adults, no juveniles and 1 chick; or one number, e.g., 13// = 13 adults, no juveniles or chicks. The following abbreviations apply:

BC = Blue Crane	CC = Crowned/Grey Crowned Crane	WC = Wattled Crane	
KB = Kori Bustard	LB = Ludwig's Bustard	SB = Stanley's/Denham's Bustard	
BS = Black Stork	WS = White Stork	AS = Abdim's Stork	
BK = Black/Southern Black Korhaan	BBK = Blackbellied Korhaan	UK = Blue Korhaan	KK = Karoo Korhaan
WBK = Whitebellied Korhaan	WQK = Whitequilled/Northern Black Korhaan		
GH = Ground Hornbill	BI = Bald/Southern Bald Ibis	SG = Spurwinged Goose	SEC = Secretarybird
BHH = Blackheaded Heron	YS = Yellowbilled Stork	HAR = Black Harrier	

Eastern Cape

In the Eastern Cape it was also extremely cold and many people started their CAR day in temperatures below zero. Graham noted that there had been several reports of Secretarybirds in coastal areas the fortnight before the count, and for the first time they didn't see any on their route which is inland.

There is a need to find more participants to count EE routes in the north-east. Some routes were delayed because of snow in this precinct. The Stretton's route, EE19, as usual had a significant number of Blue Korhaans. Welcome to Gavin Shaw, previously of KZN Wildlife, who is now the SA Crane Working Group field co-ordinator in this area.

Phil Whittington did the new route near Addo. Neville Willows did a recce for a new route in the Somerset East precinct. Neville's wife, Carmen, who teaches at a farm school, Wheatlands Primary School, has initiated a daily activity of counting the Blue Cranes in a field beside the school. Usually there are 19 or 20, but there were 143 on a recent count which must have stretched some of the younger children's counting skills! I think this is a wonderful way to encourage an appreciation of birds.

Yvonne Craig and her team counted 54 Stanley's Bustard on EH06! A photo of those on routes EH03 and EH06 with Desmond Ponti, a new participant who is a game guard at Thula Moya Reserve, appears alongside.



The Blue Crane numbers were the highest yet recorded in this province, with the majority on two routes counted by Ken and Jen Munro in fields under central pivot irrigation in the Fish River valley.

Thank you to Dave Brown and the Munro's who have kept CAR on track since Kevin Hendrickse left and to Terry and Hertel Hermann, who are now taking over as Precinct Organisers for BirdLife Eastern Cape.

Number of birds counted in July 2004 census in Eastern Cape												
Route	km	ADU No.	Observers	BC	BHH	BK	CC	LB	SB	SEC	SG	Other Species
EB01	62.3	175, 174	Kenneth & Gertie Griffith		10//		9//					
EB03	67.4	115, 680	Graham Winch & Ian Field		5//		7//		11/3/			
EB04	62.1	1568, 1567, 1584	Ken & Barbara Monfoort, Wendy Perks		10//						2//	
EE01	43	1129, 1730	Adèle Moore & Helen Lechmere-Oertel				4//				33//	
EE02	65	1967	J Filmer				2//		2//			
EE03	40	1129	Adèle Moore				141/2/		2/2/	1//		
EE06	73	1730	Helen Lechmere-Oertel		1//		2//					
EE08	72	1730	Helen Lechmere-Oertel		2//		5//				24//	
EE10	67	899	Kevin Meise									
EE12	51	901	Jenni Brown				24//				1//	
EE13	64.7	1743, 1067	R Böhmké & 8 Indwe High School birders		6//		56//				9//	
EE17	43.5	1730	Helen Lechmere-Oertel		2//		65//					
EE18	43.9	1918, 1919	Les & Adrian Larter	59//							2/1/	8UK
EE19	84.5	1130, 1583	Sandy & Hope Stretton	10//								1BS, 40UK
EG01	82.7	887	Nikki Köhly	87//	3//	1//		3//				
EG02	51.5	565	Pat Hulley		1//							
EG03	76.6	341, 1530	Bo Bonnevie & Lorraine Mullins	4//	2//			5//				1KB
EH02	55.3	313, 1771, 1772	Victor Craig, W Rosser & M Keulemans	2//	6//				15//		34//	
EH04	44.5	1132, 1767, 1766, 1976	David & Jill Tudhope, P & M Bosman		6/1/					1//		
EH05	39	1612, 1794, 1774, 1775	A & H Bezuidenhout, A & E Holstenson	8//	2/2/				11//		1//	2WBK
EH06	57.6	312, 1770, 1977, 1974	Yvonne Craig, S Leslie, D Ponti & Jones	10//	16//	1//			54//	1//	22//	3WBK
EK02	57.5	1525	Tim Cockcroft		6//							51//
EK04	59.5	884	Peter Metcalf		3//					2//		
EK05	62.5	886, 1528, 1527, 131	Maureen Turner & team		5//				1//	1//		
EP01	74	635, 1244	Patrick Brett & Denise Hoffmann	19//				9//		2//		1KB, 11KK
EP02	66	1570, 1621, 83	Hermann & Terry Hertel, Andy Nixon	20//						4/1/		
EP04	73.2	869	Peter Hall	6//		2//		3//		2//		7KK
EP06	53	868, 1089	Ken & Jenny Munro	495/102/	1//				16//	1//	191//	5KK, 6WQK
EP07	72	1475	Alan Collett					8//				4UK, 25WQK
EP08	112.2	270	Dave Brown					9//		3//		1HAR, 7KB, 4KK
EP09	31	868, 1089	Ken & Jenny Munro	393/64/					2//			
EP10	42	1731	John Bowker	2//				6//				11KK, 37WQK
EQ01	56.8	1587	Ian McEwan	34//							12//	14UK
EQ02	56	930, 1290	Don Field & Brian Ellison		2//			3//		1//		6UK
ES04	46	1476, 1973	Judy & Zorb Caryer	17//				4//				
ES05	88.6	1182, 1966, 1965	Neil Turner, Bill & Alison Brown			4//				2//		11KB
ES07	33.9	1826	Debbie Abrahamson		1//							
EU01	66	1479	Emile Plumstead		7//				8//			
Total	2297			1332	100	8	317	50	127	22	383	1BS, 1HAR, 20KB,
Birds/100 km				58.0	4.4	0.3	13.8	2.2	5.5	1.0	16.7	38KK, 72UK, 5WBK
EB - Border precinct, EE - Northeast Cape precinct, EG - Grahamstown precinct, EH - Humansdorp precinct, EK - Kenton precinct, EP - PE precinct (Aberdeen & Steytleville districts), EQ - Queenstown precinct, ES - Somerset East precinct, EU - Umtata precinct												
68WQK												

Western Cape

Swartland precinct

This area has again experienced drought, but the little rain that there has been has fallen more regularly. The highest density of Blue Cranes ever in the Swartland (74.9/100km) was recorded. Two routes had far more cranes than ever before. Riaan and Marika van der Walt saw 155 cranes on SW14, while Mel Tripp and I saw 165 on SW13! It is also important to note the numbers of juvenile Blue Cranes on SW09 (35) and SW13 (26). Jan Hofmeyr recorded 121 White Storks on the pig farm on 29 July.

Overberg precinct

July was a very dry month in the Overberg until shortly before the count, which took place in cold, strong winds. Observers on OV12 and OV14 commented on the increase in canola farming. Tom and Freya Brett were

Number of birds counted in July 2004 census in Swartland							
Route	km	ADU No.	Observers	BC	BHH	SG	Other spp.
SW01	75	1418, 1970	David McMillan & Fiona Hellmann	18/1/	3/	172/1/	
SW02	76.3	503, 1077	Sean & Louise Tucker			14/	
SW03	63.7	574, 1080	Sylvia Ledgard & Pat Waddell	13/4/	5/	62/	1BK
SW04	64	1286, 1287	Philbert & Henrietta Melck	40/		7/	2SEC
SW05	60	163	Keith Harrison	15/	1/	45/	
SW06	75.5	1368, 1359	Ralph Wordon & Reg le Roux	32/		17/	
SW07	43	477, 1362	Koos de Goede & P McGuinness	37/6/		56/	
SW08	71.2	1474	Bruce MacKenzie	52/	1/		
SW09	62	1135, 1467	Jens, Diane & Angela Oelbützel	6/35/		140/	
SW10	64.3	223	James Harrison	14/		72/	5BK
SW11	65.7	479	David & Christopher Dixon	25/	1/	9/	6BK
SW12	79.7	1552, 1553	Tielman & Alta Klynsmith	62/	1/	62/	7BK, 2SEC
SW13	52.9	991, 106	Donella Young & Mel Tripp	139/26/		120/3	4BK, 2SEC
SW14	55	506, 1882	Riaan & Marika van der Walt	154/1/		61/	
Total	908			680	12	841	23BK,6SEC
Birds/100 km				74.9	1.3	92.6	

Number of birds counted in July 2004 census in Overberg										
Route	km	ADU No.	Observers	BC	BHH	KK	SB	SEC	SG	Other spp.
OV01	59	221, 222	Des & Mary Frylinck	168/5/	2/				6/	
OV02	73	221, 222	Des & Mary Frylinck	23/3/	1/				6/	
OV03	49	213, 214	Tom & Freya Brett	25/6/	5/		4/		15/	
OV04	27.3	213, 214	Tom & Freya Brett	356/33/	3/		5/		11/	
OV05	70	228, 227, 1148, 649	John Carter, Ben, Brian & Tony	93/4/	13/	13/	4/		24/	3HAR
OV06	50.4	619, 1655	Patrick Hurly, S McLennan & team	122/	7/1/		12/	2/	7/	4BK, 2HAR
OV07	70.8	496, 1083, 801, 802	Ken & Anne Price, K & A McAdam	399/4/	5/1/	1/	5/		13/	
OV08	72.7	492	Keith & James Moodie	660/8/	15/				61/	
OV09	46	234	Craig Thom	297/	2/				60/	
OV10	55.6	56, 1585	Pieter & Ann Albertyn & Donald's	41/	8/				1/	
OV11	62.1	245	Sheila Siebert & friends	8/2/	1/		16/		8/	1HAR
OV12	57.1	215, 216, 1380	Heather Busby, Dawn & Gill	44/1/	5/	2/	29/		10/	
OV13	7.4	520, 229	Jill Mortimer, Inés, Rene & Petra	568/7/	26/	9/	9/		21/	2BK, 1HAR
OV14	91	123, 1922	John Coats & Maureen Aucamp	144/	6/	1/		1/	15/	
OV15	57.5	256, 255	Sue & Dave Whitelaw	341/	2/	4/				1BK
OV16	61.8	249, 981	P van den Berg, L Fielies & team	220/	22/		9/		8/	1BK
OV17	62	878	Lee Burman	48/	2/		16/		50/	
OV18	51	240, 1712	Wicus & Hanlie Leeuwner	192/	1/				78/	
OV19	60.5	219, 1213	Ronnie Crowther & Estelle Stodel	92/		2/	5/		11/	1HAR
OV20	56	1950, 1951	Patricia Reynolds & J Marusich	217/	10/		2/		42/	2KB
OV21	63.1	1440, 1840	Alex & Nancy Swanepoel	8/	3/		3/	1/	5/	2HAR
OV23	56.2	1062	Andrew Marshall		18/2/			1/	8/	
OV24	57.5	636, 1212	Mick D'Alton & Gerald Swanepoel	27/3/	11/		15/		29/	
OV25	33	1469, 1355	Avril Young & Gerda Hill	2/	1/		2/		16/	
OV26	19.3	871	J Arizon & 3 Teslaarsdal learners	25/					3/	
OV27	71	1942	L Witbooi & team	18/1/	18/		10/		61/	4WS
OV28	41.4	1825, 1462	Flip & Tonia Schonken		10/1/				10/	
OV29	26.5	213, 214	Tom & Freya Brett	46/7/	5/				32/	
OV33	62.9	1463	Frans de Graaff & family	4/	6/		22/2/	2/	1/	1BS, 2HAR
Total	1571			4272	213	32	170	7	612	8BK,1BS,2KB
Birds/100 km				271.9	13.6	2.0	10.8	0.4	39.0	12HAR,4WS
OV34	60.9	1550, 1551	Heynè & Sharon Brink		1/		1/	1/	4/	1BK, 14HAR
OV35	30	1469	Avril Young & Eileen Hoyle	84/6/	2/					

Number of birds counted in July 2004 census in Western Cape precincts									
Route	km	ADU No.	Observers	BC	BHH	KK	SG		Other spp.
WB01	64.5	343	Maria Andela			8/			2KB, 10LB
WB03	58	1909, 1971	Stefan & Hannetjie Theron	61/		28/			1KB
WC01	41	1291	George Hattingh & T Robinson		3/				9BK, 8SB
WK02	45	1003	Andrew Schofield	47/	5/		77/		
WU01	39	1392	J de Jaar	3/	2/				
WU02	57	539, 1332	Jonas Witbooi & Kerry Hampson	100/	2/		2/		6SB
WU03	70	1392	J de Jaar		1/				
WU04	35	539, 1332	Jonas Witbooi & Kerry Hampson		2/				
WU05	70.3	297, 1520, 1521	Mike & Gill Euston-Brown, Barry	109/	2/				8SB
Total	480			320	17	36	79		9BK,10LB, 22SB
Birds/100 km				66.7	3.5	7.5	16.5		

WB - Beaufort West precinct, WC - Calitzdorp precinct, WK - Little Karoo precinct, WU - Uniondale

disturbed to see a shooting party of seven men on OV04.

On OV34, near De Hoop Nature Reserve, Heynè and Sharon Brink saw 14 Black Harriers, one of which was collecting nesting material and dropping it at a specific area in the fynbos. Heynè and Peet Botes visited this site on 30 August and found three brown, mottle-feathered chicks with downy heads. Odette Curtis, of Western Cape Raptor Research Programme, visited this nest with Heynè in September and found that two chicks had fledged; one was killed by a predator. Heynè and Sharon's alert observation on a CAR day has led to more information being collected on this threatened species.

Heather Busby and her team counted 29 Stanley's/Denham's Bustard, a record for OV12. Despite the 'icy, howling wind' on OV13, Jill Mortimer's team of Somerset West birders saw 575 Blue Cranes. A Black Harrier and Jackal Buzzard unknowingly assisted in the count by each flushing a pair of Karoo Korhaans! Frans de Graaff noted a marked increase in the number of Stanley's Bustard on OV33 - 24! They also recorded their first Black Stork and Secretarybird for this route. Avril Young did a recce for a new route OV35.

At this point it appears as if Blue Crane numbers have reached a dynamic equilibrium in the Overberg (http://web.uct.ac.za/depts/stats/adu/species/blue_crane.htm). It is interesting that Kori Bustard are seen on OV20 in drier years.

Details about meeting on Wicus and Hanlie Leeuwner's farm are enclosed.

Beaufort West precinct

Maria Andela had an unusual count in that she saw more bustards than korhaans. For the first 34 km they did not see any birds, probably due to the icy wind. Stefan Theron saw 61 Blue Cranes on WB03 and more korhaans than anyone else on this past count.

Little Karoo precinct

Andrew Schofield saw snow for the first time on a CAR count.

Uniondale precinct

I was glad that James Harrison was able to meet Peter Chadwick, who co-ordinates these routes, and Kerry Hampson, George Hattingh and Elton le Roux while traveling through the Little Karoo recently. We are looking at the possibility of more routes in the Little Karoo area, especially as it seems to be an important area for Stanley's/Denham's Bustard. George was encouraged to see eight on his route, WC01. Kerry has made the interesting observation of Ludwig's and Stanley's Bustard breeding in the same field. All the Uniondale routes were counted a week later. Two routes had 100 or more Blue Cranes.



News from the Overberg Crane Group

Unfortunately the highlight (or rather the lowlight) of the past months has been the increased number of Blue Crane poisoning cases reported to the Overberg Crane Group. There have been many rumours around the Bredasdorp area of cranes being accidentally killed, after grain bait soaked in zinc phosphide used for gerbil control, has been found above the ground. However, the main reason for the majority of poisonings has been as a result of poisoned bait being put out to kill birds such as guinea fowl and Egyptian geese for food. Unlike before, these incidents have occurred on dairy and cattle farms, often when the landowner is away. In one instance poisoned

cranes were found about 40 km away from the source of poisoning. Cape Nature and the Overberg Crane Group field worker have made thorough investigations, but it is difficult to get enough evidence for a strong case even though the perpetrator is obvious. A meeting with the Poison Working Group (EWT) has been set up for the beginning of 2005 to draw up an action plan to address this issue.

Vicki Hudson, Overberg Crane Group

Mpumalanga

Steenkampsberg precinct

David reported that ‘the count was disappointing in terms of both species sighted and numbers. The very cold winter may have contributed to the low counts. Two Wattled Cranes were seen, the first on a winter count. Not really good as they should have been breeding! Helmeted Guineafowl numbers were down considerably at 134, following counts of 153, 292 and 236 in the previous three seasons.’ Do continue to **count Helmeted Guineafowl** on these routes, using the abbreviation **HG**, and also fill in **activity and location (i.e., the last three columns)** for **Bald Ibis**, as well as for cranes and bustards.

Middelburg precinct

These routes were counted, but Pieter du Plessis feels that they should be replaced with routes on quieter roads. There has been a major increase in open-cast mining in the past few years; the roads are now much busier and visibility is considerably reduced on one route. The CAR results show a decline in species diversity. There were a number of Blackheaded Herons on these routes and Bald Ibis were more frequently recorded. Pieter will complete Route Description Forms to document the changes in habitat and in a few years I have suggested a follow-up count on these original routes. Pieter has also planned two new routes in the Amersfoort-Bethal-Carolina District Important Bird Area.

Wakkerstroom precinct

Alison Richardson wrote: ‘It was with some sadness that Wits hosted the last official CAR count in the Wakkerstroom precinct on

Saturday 31 July 2004. Wits Bird Club will hand over the Wakkerstroom CAR precinct to the Wakkerstroom Bird Club as from January 2005, and Judy-Lynn Wheeler will take over as CAR Precinct Organiser. With the wind howling along most routes, we had to work hard to find the birds. Despite the nasty weather, everyone had a great day out on the routes, with a lot of time and energy going into ‘teaching’ our colleagues from the Wakkerstroom Bird Club how to do the count.’

Alison and Barbi Forsyth have not wasted a moment and have already spent a weekend out at Chrissiesmeer, an Important Bird Area, investigating the possibility of a new precinct with Pieter du Plessis’s help.

Please continue to **count Helmeted Guineafowl** in this precinct and use the abbreviation **HG**.

Thank you to Alison, Barbi and Lauraine Leigh for excellent coordination of these Wakkerstroom counts and for handing everything over to Judy-Lynn Wheeler in ‘apple-pie’ order. I do wish Judy-Lynn, assisted by Nigel Anderson, of BirdLife, and Beverley Thorne, all the best as they continue these routes involving birders from the local community. I hope the Wits Bird Club CAR birders enjoy the new Chrissiesmeer routes.

Standerton precinct

Colin and RONALDA WILLIAMS saw eight species, despite wind on MT01, including 19 Swainson’s Francolin, 4 Blackbellied and 3 Whitebellied Korhaans, as well as 76 Blue Cranes. Kevin and Glynis Armitage recorded 101 Blackheaded Herons, 80 of them in a heronry, on MT02.

Number of birds counted in July 2004 census in Mpumalanga											
Route	km	ADU No.	Observers	BC	BHH	BI	CC	SG	UK	HG	Other Species
MS01	56.7	726, 725	David & Helen Gaynor		2//	10//		40//			2WC
MS02	56.4	1725, 1726, 1911	Des & Anne Des Brulais, N Champion								
MS04	63	1927, 1928	John & Anita Meiring								
MS05	56.8	728, 1558	Anton Linström & Tommie Steyn		2//					19//	
MS06	64	1178	Hendrik van Wyk		2//			15//			1BK, 1SEC
MS08	36.3	1728, 1925	Paul & Leza Clarke		1//	5//					
MS09	56.6	1780	Leon-Jacques Theron		1//					16//	
MS13	59.7	724	Lientjie Cohen		1//	12//				99//	
MT01	89	1816, 1817	Colin & RONALDA WILLIAMS	76//	4//			2/5//		106//	4BBK, 1SEC, 19SF, 3WBK
MT02	61	1912, 1973	Kevin & Glynis Armitage		98/3//			21//	5//	135//	8SF, 2WQK
MW01	57	1548, 1818	Malcolm & Lorraine Forbes		1//	4//		3//		22//	
MW02	58	1337, 1370, 1001, 361	M & S Henderson, Alison & JLWheeler		10//	15//	83//	12//		84//	7SB
MW03	64.4	1391, 1744	Philip & Lynn Silcock		1//	7//	38//	1//	6//	45//	1SEC
MW04	69.5	1555, 1782	Lia Steen & Gisela Ortener		2//	24//	71//	13//	3//	274//	2SEC
MW05	68	1369	Lester Niss		1//		2//	3//		36//	1SEC, 2WBK
MW06	59.7	1750, 1511	Alan & Barbi Forsyth		5//	10//		7//		51//	3SEC
MW07	66.5	1926, 1639, 1924	Alison Hanson, Jack & Marion de Boer		11//	17//			2//	379//	2SEC
Total	1043			76	145	104	194	122	16	1266	1BK,4BBK,7SB,27SF,11SEC,
Birds/100 km				7.3	13.9	10.0	18.6	11.7	1.5	121.4	2WC,5WBK,2WQK

MM - Middelburg precinct, MS - Steenkampsberg precinct, MT - Standerton precinct, MW - Wakkerstroom precinct

Karoo, Northern Cape

Mark Anderson, Ornithologist, Northern Cape Department of Tourism, Environment & Conservation, reports:

‘It is hard to believe that 19 Karoo Large Terrestrial Bird Surveys (KLTBS) have now been conducted. Who would have thought that the KLTBS (the idea being conceived by Peter Ferreira and me over a few beers one night in the Karoo) would still be going strong after one decade! Several people who took part in the initial survey on 22 July 1995, are still participating today! These are Luke Kock, Francois Taljaard, Fritz Bättenhausen, Kobus de Villiers, Ronelle Visagie, Lorette Luscombe and Peter Ferreira. Of course, the KLTBS is a truly collaborative effort, and I am very appreciative of all the participants’ assistance, including the new contributors such as David Khakhane, Acting Reserve Manager at Doornkloof Nature Reserve.

‘The winter 2004 survey took place during extremely cold, yet fortunately relatively windless, conditions. Eric Herrmann, a Percy

FitzPatrick Institute researcher, accompanied me to the Karoo for this survey. When we arrived in Britstown at about 07h00, we were amazed to find icicles hanging from the bakkie’s mirrors, radio aerial and grill! The countryside was white with frost, a beautiful spectacle.

‘On the day, 27 people participated, counting large terrestrial birds along 54 20-km transects (i.e., 19 routes), thus surveying a total distance of 1080 km. A total of 1203 birds were counted (111.3 birds per 100 km), with Blue Cranes (836), White-quilled Korhaans (133) and Ludwig’s Bustards (91) being the most numerous. Six other large terrestrial birds were counted, with Black-headed Heron (1), Secretarybird (4), Kori Bustard (6) and Blue Korhaan (11) being the least numerous.

‘An impressive number of Blue Cranes were counted: 825 adults and 11 juveniles (77.4 cranes per 100 km). Although the density of cranes was high, compared with the 52.5 birds recorded during July 2003, it does not surpass the 124.2 birds per 100 km recorded during

Number of birds counted in July 2004 census in Karoo											
Route	km	ADU No.	Observers	BC	BH	BI	CC	SEC	UK	WQK	Other spp.
NK021	20	486	Luke Kock	1//				3//			
NK022	20	486	Luke Kock					10//	9//	2//	
NK023	20	486	Luke Kock	41/5//				3//	1//		
NK031	20	1196, 1197	Maxie & Johan Jonk								
NK032	20	1196, 1197	Maxie & Johan Jonk	142/1//				3//		2//	1BHH
NK033	20	1196, 1197	Maxie & Johan Jonk					1//			
NK041	20	501, 1205	Francois & Hester Taljaard					10//		2//	
NK042	20	501, 1205	Francois & Hester Taljaard	8//						3//	
NK043	20	501, 1205	Francois & Hester Taljaard	76/1//				3//	1//		
NK061	20	494	Fritz Battenhausen	4//				2//	1//	2//	
NK062	20	494	Fritz Battenhausen	266//						1//	
NK063	20	494	Fritz Battenhausen	67//				7//			
NK071	20	1580	Petrus van der Merwe								
NK072	20	1580	Petrus van der Merwe							4//	2SG
NK073	20	1580	Petrus van der Merwe							1//	
NK091	20	480	Peter Ferreira	2//				1//			
NK092	20	480	Peter Ferreira					4//		2//	
NK093	20	480	Peter Ferreira							4//	
NK101	20	1952	David Khakhane	123//				1//			
NK102	20	1952	David Khakhane							1//	
NK103	20	1952	David Khakhane	4//						5//	76SG
NK111	20	1954	JD du Plessis							1/1//	
NK112	20	1954	JD du Plessis							1//	
NK113	20	1954	JD du Plessis					6//			
NK141	20	499	Henri Smith					1//			
NK142	20	499	Henri Smith	32//						1//	
NK143	20	499	Henri Smith					1//			
NK151	20	1898	Marisa van der Merwe							16//	
NK152	20	1898	Marisa van der Merwe							4//	
NK153	20	1898	Marisa van der Merwe							9//	3KB
NK181	20	1579	Diana Greathead	2//	2//	3//				7//	
NK182	20	1579	Diana Greathead	19//			11/1//		7//	11//	
NK183	20	1579	Diana Greathead		2//	3//			2//		
NK221	20	105	Mark Anderson					10//		10//	
NK222	20	105	Mark Anderson					3//		4//	
NK223	20	105	Mark Anderson							2//	3KB
NK231	20	509	Ronelle Visagie		4//					2//	
NK232	20	509	Ronelle Visagie		2//	5//				10//	
NK233	20	509	Ronelle Visagie							8//	
NK261	20	1413	Nico Bezuidenhout							1//	
NK262	20	1413	Nico Bezuidenhout								
NK263	20	1413	Nico Bezuidenhout		1//						
NK271	20	1952	David Khakhane							7//	
NK272	20	1952	David Khakhane							2//	
NK273	20	1952	David Khakhane							2//	
NK351	20	1953	Erik Battenhausen					2//		2//	
NK352	20	1953	Erik Battenhausen					1//		1//	
NK353	20	1953	Erik Battenhausen								
NK391	20	493	Lorette Luscombe	18/2//	8//	4//				1//	
NK392	20	493	Lorette Luscombe	20/2//	1//	3//					
NK393	20	493	Lorette Luscombe							1//	
NK451	20	1490	Madeleine van Heerden		2//					2//	
NK452	20	1490	Madeleine van Heerden							2//	
NK453	20	1490	Madeleine van Heerden								
Total	1080			836	43	91	4	11		133	1BHH,6KB,
Birds/100 km				77.4	4.0	8.4	0.4	1.0		12.3	78SG

Number of birds counted in July 2004 census in north-eastern Free State											
Route	km	ADU No.	Observers	BC	BH	BI	CC	SEC	SG	UK	Other spp.
FN13	66	606	Thomas & Marie Wessels		1//						
FN16	55	701	Theunis Bekker	25//	1//	1//			24//	11/1//	
FN24	65	719, 720	Georg & Erla Wandrag		1//						
FN26	66.8	974	Bradley Gibbons		1//	7//	1//				
FN28	55	1892	Otto Nel	3//		6//	3//			4/4//	
FN29	69.5	974	Bradley Gibbons		3//	22//	2//	2//	2//	6//	
FN32	52.8	1072	David Weaver		3//	12//	1//			7//	
FN33®	51	1956	Gregg Mousley		1//	1//	1//				
FN35	55	946	TI Wessels						23//		
FN37	55	708	Derick Labuschagne		4//				9//	2//	5WQK
FN39	65	1433, 1470	Peter Millin & Geoff Potter		1//	15//					
FN43	61.3	706, 1812	Harry & Christa Illsley		14//	10//	2//			1//	
FN44	68.7	714	Frik Oosthuysen		10//	2//			20/14//	6//	
FN45	72.5	188, 945	Hazel Vickery & M van Gelder	5//		19/3//			2//	1//	
FN46	64	718, 1813	Gerhard & E van Deventer		1//	11//					
FN48	56.8	605, 1820	Janet & Koos Lourens		1//						5WQK
FN49	48	944	Gert Maritz		3/1//	8//			2//	6//	
FN50	56.4	942	Pieter Koorhof		2//	8//			4//		
FN51	68.1	1157, 1821	Frans & Lana du Plooy		4//						
FN53	60	1272	JC Koster		2//	2//	1//				
FN55	62	703	Nacelle Collins	4//	14//	71//	26//				13WS
FN57	61.8	1932, 1933	Pietre & Naude Enslin		7//	1//				8//	
FN58	68.6	705	Paulus Fihlo		5//	17//			15//	10//	
FN59	39.9	336, 1822	Louis & Maureen Mileham				1//	1//			1HAR
FN60	66	1505	Brian Barnes			2//				6//	60WQK
Total	1510			37	80	218	28	12	116	73	1HAR,70WQK
Birds/100 km				2.5	5.3	14.4	1.9	0.8	7.7	4.8	13WS

July 2002. During the most recent survey, there were observations of a few large flocks of Blue Cranes: 64 (Francois Taljaard), 67 (Maxie and Johan Jonk), 123 (David Khakhane), and 266 (Fritz Battenhausen).

‘Thanks to all the participants for waking early on such a cold winter’s day to take part in this important survey. A special thanks to Ronelle Visagie for her very competent and efficient organization of the KLTBS. Thanks too to Donella Young for her sterling efforts at the helm of the CAR ship.

‘I think that it would be most timely to write a comprehensive review after the 20th Karoo Large Terrestrial Bird Survey, putting the collected data into perspective and examining trends in large terrestrial bird populations. Watch this space . . .’

Thank you to Mark and Ronelle for coordinating this project so efficiently and to you all for counting so regularly.

Free State

Brian Colahan, Ornithologist, Free State Department of Tourism, Environment and Economic Affairs, reports:

‘The survey results for 108 CAR routes have so far been received for the 2004 winter Free State CAR, covering a total of 7111 km in the three precincts. The 220 observers involved spotted 5181 birds of 15 species, or 73 birds/100 km, somewhat lower than the 82/100 km recorded for the 2003 winter survey. Several of the route leaders in the two northern precincts (especially in the north-eastern Free State [FN]) reported windy weather, but conditions in the southern Free State precinct (FS), though rather cold to begin with, were more pleasant. The poorer survey conditions in FN are hopefully the main reason for the rather low total (648

birds, or 43/100 km) for that precinct. Results for the north-western Free State precinct (FW) were somewhat better (715 birds, or 47/100 km, dominated by 446 White-quilled Korhaans), while the figures for FS were even more encouraging: a total of 3 818 birds (93/100 km) were recorded, with 1197 Spur-winged Goose, 1152 Blue Cranes, and 905 White-quilled Korhaans dominating.

‘Nacelle Collins probably had the most interesting survey in the FN (along FN55, just south of Harrismith), with 13 over-wintering White Storks (the only ones recorded in the Free State), and the most Bald Ibises (71) and Crowned Cranes (26) counted along any route. For the first time, more Blue Cranes were recorded in FW (55 birds) than in FN (37), but these were all recorded along just one route, FW46 (between Edenville and Lindley), surveyed by Vella and Hilda van Niekerk Brink.

‘In FS, Blue Cranes were recorded on 17 routes, but with 61% of them on just two routes: 364 along Brian Colahan’s route (FS118, north-west of Philippolis), and 336

Number of birds counted in July 2004 census in north-western Free State										
Route	km	ADU No.	Observers	BC	BHH	SEC	SG	WQK	Other Spp.	
FW13	55.5	1515, 1903	Johann & R-M Potgieter							
FW16	68	1172, 1749	Pieter & Cathy Lubbe							
FW18	57.2	1268	Herman Jordaan		2//		3//	100//	8UK	
FW19	70	1160	FG Botha		1//				19//	
FW26	76.4	1174	Fanie Gouws		1//				9//	
FW28	55	1162	Piet van der Merwe						34//	
FW29	64.3	1168	Gert Claassen				12//			
FW34	78	1163	Des Walker		4//		22//	51//		
FW36	78.2	28, 1809	Johan & Amelia Hardy		4//		3//	16//		
FW39	57.4	1166	Johan Grobler						13//	
FW42	67.8	1646	Andre Hoffmann		6//		2//	14//		
FW43	67	1176	Robert Drewes						17//	
FW45	51.6	1563, 1824	Gert & Elize Jordaan						12//	
FW46	52.7	1624	Vella & Hilda v Niekerk Brink	55//					12// 4UK	
FW47	54.8	1890, 1891	Greg & Janine Goosen				2//	20//	7UK	
FW50	78	1938, 1939	H & E Lekaota		3//	3//		2//		
FW51	79	1253	JJ Den Houting				3//	51//	7UK	
FW52@	60	1957	Rosemary Girard		9//	2//	11//	4//		
FW53	86.5	1173, 1940	Chris & Martina de Lange		11//			51//		
FW54	51	1176	Robert Drewes						3//	
FW55	62.5	1936, 1937	Andries & Leanda Nel		6//		47//	2//		
FW56	63.8	1901, 1902	Stephen & Marietjie Hill		7//			10//		
FW57	74	1958	Joey Knoesen		6//		15//	6//		
Total	1509			55	60	5	120	446	26UK	
Birds/100 km				3.6	4.0	0.3	8.0	29.6		

along Buks Roets's route (FS60, north-west of Luckhoff). Although Ludwig's Bustard numbers were disappointingly low in FS (48), the other two bustards were also recorded in this precinct, with one Stanley's on Erika Schulze's route FS27 (which also had the only Karoo Korhaans), two Kori Bustards on Fanie and Jeanette Buys's route FS56, and another on Kevin Preddy's route, FS42. Sixty-six percent (784) of FS's Spur-winged Geese were counted by Hannes Blom (along FS35), who also saw 83 Blue Cranes just south of Bloemfontein, at the northern end of S434. Some other impressive totals in the southern Free State were 45 Blue Korhaans along FS12 (Herman and Janet Kleynhans), 95 White-quilled Korhaans along FS56 (Fanie and Jeanette Buys), eight Secretarybirds and 63 White-quilled Korhaans along FS91 (Rick Nuttall).

Thank you to Brian for all the time involved in organizing so many routes and writing this report.

CAR counts can be real fun!

Donella's email warned of possible inclement weather conditions for the winter count. We watched in horror as the barometer fell from its winter high of 1046 to 1008 on Thursday 29th. 'Big west wind coming with a distinct possibility of rain.' Friday dawned a lovely winter's day, but soon what the barometer had predicted occurred and by lunch-time the wind was howling. Just before Cradock the sky became very overcast and the Zebra Park mountains were obscured.

Soon after our arrival on the farm, the rain started. About 8.00 that night the wind just died down as though someone had closed a door and a strangely warm evening allowed us to enjoy a karoo braai.

Saturday dawned with a clear sky and we prepared to head off on our count. What a beautiful world greeted us as we left, the sky was a bright blue, the veld brown from winter's frosts contrasting sharply with the mountains around our route that overnight had been covered in a bright white mantle of snow. Each time we stopped to scan the veld and farmlands for birds, our eyes were drawn to the beautiful karoo vista along our route. Before long the temperature climbed from minus six to a comfortable sixteen degrees. The bird count was above average and we felt that they too had not enjoyed the gales of yesterday and were now catching up on their feeding and also revelling in the glorious day by dancing with one another.

You never know what the CAR count will bring but this year will certainly be remembered for the winter wonderland.

*Ken and Jen Munro
Eastern Cape*

Number of birds counted in July 2004 census in southern Free State											
Route	km	ADU No.	Observers	BC	BHH	LB	SEC	SG	UK	WQK	Other
FS06	76	1059	Pierre de Villiers	64//		1//	2//		11//	5//	
FS07	58.3	1746	Angelo Nicholas	99/2//		10//	4//		4//	2//	
FS08	68	6, 1429	André & Annatjie Schlemmer	3/1//		1//	2//		1//	4//	1HAR
FS09	62.5	24	Brian Colahan						6//	7//	
FS12	55.6	662, 1180	Herman & Janet Kleynhans	19//					45//	40//	1HAR
FS14	65	1203	Helena Vorster						1//	20//	
FS15	70.1	1056	PL Crouse			2//	2//			4//	
FS17	74.8	1620	Dawie Kok	4//			2//	2//	4//	23//	1HAR
FS18	68	102, 1946	Dawie de Swardt & H Bester		1//		2//		6//	13//	
FS20	64.7	1432	Anne McLeod		1//				1//	51//	
FS21	65	682	Leon Barkhuizen			5//	2//	1//		20//	
FS23	76	683	Chris Botha	118//						1//	
FS27	78	694	Erika Schulze	6/2//		1//			4//	6//	2KK, 1SB
FS29	61.1	822	Stephanie Gerber		1//				9//	10//	
FS31	76.7	259	Johan van Niekerk				1//		11//	4//	
FS35	78.8	1258	Hannes Blom	83//				784//	10//	22//	
FS40	73.8	1257	Steven Squires						2//	9//	
FS42	70.1	952	Kevin Preddy	2//					9/1//	1KB	
FS43	77	1801	Christo de Meyer		1//					19//	
FS45	83.8	1169	Stefan du Preez		1//	1//		5//	28//	6//	
FS47	83	1055	Johan van den Berg		1//		2//	4//		19//	
FS48	75	1808	Ockie Boshoff						8//	16//1	
FS51	80	1049, 1796	Thea & Doep du Plessis	30//	1//	1//	2//			1//	
FS52	72	1900	Charles Lötter			2//				6//	
FS54	57.5	1262, 818	J Liefbrig & E Beemster-Boer		1//		5//	6//	11//	61//	
FS56	71.8	988, 987	Stephanus & Jeanette Buys		1//			2//	7//	95//	2KB
FS60	71	1152, 1289	Buks & Annatjie Roets	336//			2//			24//	
FS65	81	1200	Stephan Barnard				5//	45//		28//	
FS66	55	1399, 1800	Tom & Surika Mostert							5//	
FS67	68.2	950	Daan, Tina & Marizan Müller			1//	147//		11//	10//	
FS69	76	1065	Deon du Plessis		1//				7//	30//	5//
FS73	68	1723, 1805	Callie & Renett Bam				1//			18//	
FS77	54	1263, 1264	Henk & Laetitia van Vuuren		1//			2//	24//	8//	
FS79	55.7	1397	Dewald Liebenberg							20//	
FS82	73.4	1960	W Koen			3//		3//			
FS84	52	1297	Johan Coertzen				2//		10//		
FS85	80	285	JB Cloete					46//	3//	8//	
FS87	58.2	1501, 1500	Wessel & Rina Bester		1//				5//		
FS88	61	1949	Wimpie Geyer		1//			5//	5//	19//	
FS91	60.3	641	Rick Nuttall	3//	4//		8//	4//	5//	63//	
FS93	52	1799, 988	Peter Divall & Stephanus Buys	2//	1//	5//			4//	1//	
FS94	71.8	1048	Samuel Pauw				2//	9/8//		1//	
FS95	78.9	700	Johan Watson		2//	3//			14//	13//	
FS96	68.5	1897, 1896	Pat & Louis Fourie						6//		
FS99	67	1057	Lourens Goosen		2//			36//		14//	
FS101	59	1046	Blackie de Swardt	10//	1//	2//	1//		3//		
FS102	75.5	687	Riëtte Griesel	2//		6//		6//	4//	8//	
FS103	55	1052	Duart Hugo		2//					4//	
FS105	77.5	864	Sawas Vrahimis	2//			2//			1//	
FS108	61	129, 1959	Allen Jones & Jennifer Lotter		7//		2//	30//	2//	8//	17BI
FS110	55	1396	Jeremy Jones						25//	49/1//	
FS111	73.8	1724	Wolfe Wolfaardt				2//		6//	12//	1BS
FS112	61	1747	Morné Pretorius			1//	32//		16//	20//	
FS114	69	713	Francois Nieuwoudt		3//			4//		4//	
FS115	73	1644	Dawie Human		1//		2//	4//		4//	
FS116	56	1645	Hannes du Toit		4//				2//	22//	
FS117	67	691, 1807	Willie & Dawn Mostert						10//	14//	
FS118	69	24	Brian Colahan	364//		5//	1//	2//	2//	8//	
FS119	69.4	1140, 1141	John & Jill Moffett		2//		2//	2//	4//	20//	
FS120	76.2	1889	JC Labuschagne		6//				1//	36//	
Total	4092			1152	51	48	59	1197	379	905	17BI, 1BS, 3HAR,
Birds/100 km				28.2	1.2	1.2	1.4	29.3	9.3	22.1	3KB, 2KK, 1SB

KwaZulu-Natal

Conditions were very cold in KZN, which is obvious in the accompanying photograph taken by Sandi Calverley during a coffee break. Their KO01 count was disappointing, but they did see four Ground Hornbills on their way home.



In the Swartberg, Mark Meter saw 183 Crowned Cranes, of which 160 were feeding in a maize field. Mark also saw a Goliath Heron in a dam on his route and a Martial Eagle in a tree over the dam. I am glad that Pat and Bruce Whittle have been able to continue Rod Dorning's route, KG09. The highest total of Wattled Cranes (21) was seen on KG11 by Jimmy and Lorraine Scott. Stiggs and Lyn Cathcart made a note that they saw three Bald Ibis at 30.1 km on their route (KG05) in the same place as 4-5 years ago. As this species is uncommon in this precinct, I checked back and found that, sure enough, two Bald Ibis were in the same stubble field at 30.2 km in winter 1998! This highlights the huge advantage of the same people counting the same route year after year.

Conditions were very cold on the snowy Underberg routes. At 60 km along his KU01 route, Chris Thomas has seen a roost of about 70 Bald Ibis for the last six months. Many thanks to Bridget and Richard Robinson, who have counted KU02 regularly for 7 years! They are moving to Nottingham Road, where they hope to do a Midlands route. Their last Underberg count had the highlight of nine Eland walking through a pasture.

Shirley Bennett reported a dramatic increase in Helmeted Guineafowl numbers on Midlands routes.

Blue Crane numbers were at an all time low, with only 16 sighted on all routes throughout the province! Ken Gordon and Neil Smith saw eight White-bellied Korhaans on their route, KL01. Ken did a recce for a route in the Weenen Nature Reserve in August. Darryl Baxter saw a Swainson's Francolin with five juveniles on KV03. The highest total for this species (12) was recorded by Rob Collett on KL10, a route through Chelmsford Nature Reserve.

Thank you for **including oribi** (OR) in KZN counts. There were more Oribi on Malcolm Gemmell's route (24) than were counted in the whole of KZN in January (23). Eleven oribi were seen on the Midlands routes. Please continue to count oribi, record the km as usual, write 'Oribi' in the species column and the number of individuals in a group. This information will contribute towards research being conducted by KZN Wildlife on this threatened species.

Do remember to **count gamebirds in KZN** and use the abbreviations **HG** for Helmeted Guineafowl, **CF** for Crested Francolin, **SF** for Swainson's Francolin, **NF** for Natal Francolin, **RNF** for Rednecked Francolin, **RWF** for Redwing Francolin, **GWF** for Greywinged Francolin and **SHF** for Shelley's Francolin.

Thank you to Tim Wood, of BirdLife Port Natal, for all his time in keeping in touch with CAR Precinct Organisers in KZN.

Number of birds counted in July 2004 census in KwaZulu-Natal													
Route	km	ADU No.	Observers	BC	BHH	BI	CC	HG	SB	SEC	SG	Other species	
KC01	50	433	Malcolm Gemmell		60//	16//	8//		4//	1//	19//1	24OR	
KD01	82	1964	Hennie van Jaarsveld		3//	35//1							
KD02	63	736, 1179	Tony & Val Cross	2//	4//	4//		35//			2//		
KD03	74	1830	T Müller		1//			2//			4//		
KD04	52	611, 1832	Tony & Brenden Roberts					159//					
KD05	50.2	611, 1832	Tony & Brenden Roberts		4//	11//	2//	43//					
KD06	50	1755, 1709	Carol & Myles Ellerker		1//							6WBK	
KD07	70	909, 1835	Heino & Zeld Wellmann		1//	6//						3WBK	
KD08	63	1834	Peter Struweg								2//		
KD11	58	611, 1833	Tony & Brenden Roberts			2//		160//				2WBK	
KG02	56.2	623, 1073, 626	Brian Byers, P Lowry & M Rivett	2//	6//		95//		5//		36//	3OR	
KG03	53.6	626, 1779	Malcolm & Sarah Rivett		8//		60//		1//		29//	1HAR	
KG04	73.3	627, 628	Bob & Judi Williams				6//	43//	7//	2//	11//		
KG04	56	1134, 1133	Stiggs & Lyn Cathcart		1//	3//		16//			2//		
KG06	58	1536, 1537	John & Val Baxter		2//	2//	4//		4//	2//	11//	2WC	
KG07	48.7	631	Mark Meter	7//	1//		183//	30//	6//	2//	37//		
KG08	63.2	630	Kobus Nel		1//					3//	12//		
KG09	14	427, 428	Bruce & Pat Whittle		1//				1//		1//		
KG10	36.3	1240, 1241	Ed & Myra Wells		2//		78//		5//				
KG11	53.7	632, 633	Jimmy & Lorraine Scott		4//		108/39//	43//	2/1//		14//	3OR, 21WC	
KL01	84.2	50, 142	Ken Gordon & Neil Smith		6//		2//	124//	5//	4//	5//	4OR, 8WBK	
KL02	87	610	Rod Dicks		6//	17//					5//	2WBK	
KL10	32.2	1504	Rob Collett					119//			48//	12SF	
KL11	40	814	Ann Gray & 3 Grade 3 learners		10//							1WS	
KM01	73.9	498, 333	Margie Sleight & L Haines	2//	7//			51//		1//	31//	4OR, 2WC	
KM02	69.5	474, 1581, 1610	S Bennett, E Hughes, B Jones		9//		8//	155//	5//	2//	40//	3OR, 4WC	
KM03	100	1887, 1888	Alan & Bernardine Turner		7//		6//	158//			6//		
KM04	35	1885	Elizabeth, MA & R Martens		5//			3//				2OR	
KM05	81	1904, 1905	Drummond & Gloria Densham		7//						5//	2WS	
KM06	90	167	Pamela Nicol	1//	4//		36//	80//		1//	17//	1NF	
KM07	69.1	490, 1843	Kevin & Lindy McCann		1//						5//		
KM08	58	187, 1828	Monte & Eunice Pera		17//		10/1//	30//			53//	1HAR, 2OR	
KN01	66.4	927, 1756	Johan & Christine de Villiers		3//	6//					2//		
KN03	55.8	1609, 1754	Andre & Hettie Bouwer		4//			14//		2//	5//	5NF, 3OR	
NK04	48	925	Alan Schwikkard		3//	12//		20//		2//	13//	3WBK	
KN05	41.2	1071, 1742	John & Kathy Sharpe		2//	10//							
KN06	73	1929, 1930	Theuns & Lerouxna Botha		10//	13//	4//				37//	4GWF, 2SF, 4UK	
KO01	53.4	425, 1529, 1963, 431	Gavin & Sandi Calverley & team		1//								
KP01	63.5	1792	Frik Lemmer		6//	5//		25//		2//	160//		
KU01	68	429, 1961, 740	C Thomas, A Abrey & J Ellison	2//	7//	5//	11//	35//	13//	1//	10//	3OR, 2WC	
KU02	68	1218, 741	Bridget & Richard Robinson		24//		50//	44//			79//	1BS, 5OR, 1WC	
KV01	82.4	1683	AP Keeve		19//	13//			3//	1//	15//	1BBK	
KV03	61.3	1566	Darryl Baxter			9//		27//			4//	6SF, 3WBK	
KV04	34.6	1790, 1722	Arlene Steyn & Charl Oberholster			2//				3//			
Total	2661				16	258	172	711	1416	62	29	721	1BS, 1BBK, 4GWF, 2HAR
Birds/100 km					0.6	9.7	6.5	26.7	53.2	2.3	1.1	27.1	6NF, 56OR, 20SF, 4UK, 32WC, 3WS, 27WBK
KC - Creighton precinct, KD - Dundee precinct, KE - Escourt precinct, KG - East Griqualand precinct, KL - Ladysmith precinct, KM - Midlands precinct, KN - Newcastle precinct, KO - Melmoth precinct, KP - Paulpietersburg precinct, KU - Underberg precinct, KV - Vryheid precinct													