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

The Tony and Lisette Lewis
Foundation South Africa



COORDINATED AVIFAUNAL ROADCOUNTS (CAR)

Newsletter 19

December 2005

"A wonderful old farmer along the way passed us and said he measures his year by us counting birds!!" *From an email sent by Rose Laatz (KEOI)*

General

As this year races to an end and we prepare for the next CAR count, the headlines focus on rising rates of HIV infections, diminishing oil resources, global climate change and recently threats of avian flu. We cannot escape the fact that our lives are intricately linked to each other and to changes in our environment and it may feel like the web of life is unravelling. However, we do have choices and can still see signs of hope around us and plant seeds of hope within our communities. I was encouraged to see that quality time together was highlighted in the Endangered Wildlife Trust newsletter.

Your response to the funding appeal that Les sent out with the last newsletter gave me hope. Thank you so much for responding generously, either individually or as Bird Clubs. We are fully aware that participants already give an incredible amount regularly in terms of petrol, time and skills, quite often on a shrinking, 'retired income' — deep thanks for your ongoing commitment to conservation! The latest issue of the journal, *Biodiversity and Conservation* highlights the value of locally-based monitoring, 'citizen science', or 'people science' as Les Underhill, our Director calls it.

The winter count took place in good weather conditions throughout the country. Exceptionally high numbers of Blue Cranes were counted in the Overberg and Swartland, with some large flocks sighted (see trends on website, click on Blue Crane in table at foot of CAR webpage). Unusual numbers of White Storks, a migrant species, were recorded this last winter.

Early in August James Harrison and I travelled to Oudtshoorn to give presentations and feedback on ADU projects to Cape Nature. I always appreciate the opportunity to meet people. Natalie Baker and Paul Buccholz, who are now coordinating the Uniondale routes were present, as well as Flip Esau, the new Kammanassie Reserve Manager, and Elton le Roux who initiated the new Calitzdorp route.

Photographs of habitat

Debbie Abrahamson sent me some photos of the habitat along different sections of her route, which really helped me to picture the area. If you are able to send photographs showing the typical habitat I would like to start a record of this. Please mark the date, route number and km (GPS coordinates too, if you have them) at which the photo was taken on the back of the photograph or if you send a digital photograph, do include these details in the file name e.g. OW15, 10km, 28-01-2006. This is optional!

Climate change, biodiversity and energy

Climate change has always been part of the earth's history, but what is worrying is the accelerated pace of climate change due largely to the effects of burgeoning human populations and our marked impact on our environment. Birds, like other species, have usually been able to adapt to climate shifts, but larger birds and other species which breed slowly may be unable to adapt in time. A report from a coalition of conservation groups, led by the Royal Society for the Protection of Birds, shows compelling evidence indicating that although global warming is widely thought of as a phenomenon of the future, it is already changing the natural world.

Some of the most significant changes that we have caused, highlighted by Wendy Foden, of South African National Biodiversity Institute (SANBI), in a seminar here recently, are increases in carbon dioxide levels and halocarbons due to industry, increases in methane and nitrous oxide due to agriculture, release of ozone due to car exhaust fumes and aerosols and changes in water vapour content. The earth is predominantly cool adapted, but there is a predicted increase in temperature of 1.5–5.8 °C by 2100 due to global warming. "Many senior

scientists are now concluding that sea levels will probably rise by up to five metres through displacement — independent of any melting — when western Antarctica slips into the sea."! (*Africa — Birds & Birding* article below.) In South Africa the west is predicted to become hotter and drier and the east cooler and wetter.

In an article entitled "Too hot to handle?" in the October/November *Africa — Birds & Birding* Rob Simmons and Phoebe Barnard explore the impact of climate change on African birds. Current models of climate change based on increased temperature, carbon dioxide and reduced soil moisture predict especially serious impacts on the Succulent Karoo biome. This biome and the Fynbos biome are two of the world's richest biodiversity 'hotspots'. The Global Change Research Group of SANBI at Kirstenbosch has shown that the Fynbos biome could be reduced by 35–50% in the next 50–100 years, and the Succulent Karoo biome may virtually disappear. Already there is extensive loss of habitat through man's activities, but loss of habitat through climate change is often not taken into account.

As the above article points out, **long-term field studies are extremely valuable when it comes to climate change.** We need long-term datasets to be able to distinguish the "noise of annual variability from the signal of long-term trends". So take heart that bouncing over bumpy roads counting birds year in and year out, is vital! At the moment the South African Environmental Observatory Network (SAEON) is gathering long term datasets and compiling a comprehensive data management system so that this kind of information becomes readily available. Long term datasets world-wide already show **recent climate-induced changes in range for more than 434 species of trees, shrubs, invertebrates, fish, mammals and birds** and 80% have been in the direction predicted by climatic models. Egg-laying in birds and the timing of flowering trees has also changed significantly in some species.

Climate change will affect individual species within biomes differently, causing some species relationships to 'uncouple' and ecosystem composition to change in complex ways. Some species are vulnerable to climate change whereas others are not. Some species will contract their ranges, others may move out of the range of a 'dependent' species. Birds and other species don't have deep freezes and other ways of preserving food — so their breeding cycles are often intricately linked to the time of peak abundance of food for growing offspring. Studies have shown that climate change is sometimes causing the 'prey abundance' to be out of synchrony with the breeding peak leading to decreases in successful breeding attempts.

Our present reliance on oil and coal for energy and electricity has caused much of this global climate change and rising costs are making renewable energy sources like wind, solar and bio-fuels more competitive. Renewable energy from solar and wind does not reduce biodiversity as long as bulk renewable energy facilities are sited appropriately. However the extensive expansion of croplands to produce bio-fuels could have a serious impact on biodiversity. Estimates suggest that powering all the world's vehicles with biofuels would mean doubling the amount of land devoted to farming!! So nurturing new forms of energy and diversifying our sources is necessary for an environmentally and economically sound future — there is no alternative! (*National Geographic*, August 2005).

In February 2005 the proposal for the first commercial wind farm in South Africa, near Darling, received approval from the Department of Environmental Affairs and Tourism. This is an important first step in utilizing renewable sources of energy. The CAR data was used for an Environmental Impact Assessment in this process. It is vital to continue monitoring, especially as in the US some wind farms in a particular area may be shut down to reduce raptor mortalities. However, of every 10,000 birds killed each year in the US by human related causes (including cats, buildings, communication towers, vehicles and pesticides), less than one is

Thank you for your donations!

K & G Armitage, T Bekker, Bosman family, H Busby, L Burman, L Byrnes, N Champion, A Collett, J & G Collett, I & D Cooke, R Crowther, GR de Klerk, G & D Densham, D & A Desbrulais, D Field, G Flemming, D & H Gaynor, M Gemmell, R Gilmore, F Hellmann, Horne family, R Laatz, J Lardner-Burke, S Ledgard, J Lieffrig, R Lind, C Lotz, J & K Lourens, G Maritz, J McLuskie, P & H Melck, J Meiring, K Moodie, J Mortimer, K & A Price, B. Rowland, E Stodel, A Swanepoel, G Swanepoel, Tudhope family, M van der Merwe, P Waddell, A White, S Wilton, D Woods.



killed by a wind turbine. But the area around the base of the wind turbine becomes a 'no-go' area for birds.

Collectively we can make a difference, by just being aware and taking small steps like re-using water (I have been amazed at how much rinsing water one can collect in the kitchen for watering plants and shower water for flushing toilets), spending as little time as possible in our cars, buying unpackaged seasonal local produce, re-cycling, using compact fluorescent light bulbs, candlelight suppers. I commend you on supporting a project like this and I know many of you are involved in your own areas in conserving biodiversity in other ways and also on a larger scale like using bird-friendly management practices on your farms, conserving natural habitat, monitoring powerlines etc. To encourage you a workshop was held in May, hosted by SANBI and funded by the Department of Environmental Affairs and Tourism to explore ways of supporting and strengthening the role of the private sector in biodiversity conservation. Whatever you do, share it with others so that the network of 'helping hands' is spread widely. As Michael Rands, Director BirdLife International, highlights in an editorial in *World Birdwatch* 27(2): building community participation by "local involvement" can go a long way towards "achieving long term conservation alongside sustainable development". In South Africa our natural biodiversity heritage is beautiful, bountiful and priceless! As one participant wrote on their form under 'Ander kenmerke' about time spent absorbing the sounds and beauty: "Bestee 'n bietjie tyd hier om net te luister en jou siel te verryk".

"The system of life on this planet is so astoundingly complex that it was a long time before man realised it was a system at all" Douglas Adam, *Last chance to see*. p. 192.

Date of summer CAR count

The date set for the summer count is **Saturday, 28 January 2006**. Start your count 1–2 hours after sunrise and make every effort to do the count on this specified date. 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 winter count will be on Saturday, 29 July 2006.

Email addresses

Do keep us informed of any email address changes. I sent out an email to you all about the website report on the winter count and a number bounced back. If you didn't receive that email, do please let me know!

Project material on the website

If you are missing any project material such as **Information Sheets**, or need extra **CAR leaflets** to hand out, these can be downloaded from a list at the foot of the CAR webpage. The **interim CAR winter count report** is also here, or on the 'What is new' page of our website. There is also an informative page on **Avian Flu** on our website.

Count information

Apart from the change of some species names (see below) there are no changes to any of the project material. I have enclosed a **CAR II roadcount form**, with the **new names, their abbreviations** and a CAR leaflet. The leaflet is particularly helpful for farmers who are sometimes justifiably concerned about strangers scanning their farmlands.

It is important to take other people with you on a count; it helps to have more eyes and share the experience, but it also means that if you can't do a count, someone else knows the route.

Thank you for sending your winter results through more promptly than usual. It is **not necessary to fill in the 'Relevant features nearby' column for every sighting**, only if you feel a particular feature has **attracted the bird(s)**.

I do encourage you to read the **Information Sheets** prior to the count and don't forget to take them with you, as well as your **route map**. Forms are available in Afrikaans as well.

Athol Marchant, KZN Wildlife Ecologist and Co-ordinator of the EWT Oribi Working Group, has requested that oribi be included in the Eastern Cape and Mpumalanga counts as well as KZN, while scanning for CAR birds. Record the km as usual, write 'oribi' in the species column and the number of individuals in a group.

During your count do make sure that you fill in **habitat for all species** and the last three columns only for cranes and bustards. The details at the top of the form are also most important. Please send in all your data by the middle of March, and always **keep a copy yourself!**

Change of species names and abbreviations

As you all know the new Roberts VII is out, weighty with much information! So we will be using the new names where necessary. Fortunately there are not many name changes amongst the large terrestrial birds, as it makes sense to change some species abbreviations too. The hyphens have returned to some names. If you are Afrikaans speaking you are definitely at an advantage as fewer names have changed!

The main changes are:

Stanley's to Denham's Bustard, so the abbreviation will change from **SB** to **DB**.

Whitequilled Korhaan to Northern Black Korhaan, so the abbreviation will change from **WQK**

to **NBK**.

Black Korhaan to Southern Black Korhaan, so the abbreviation will change from **BK** to **SBK**.

These changes appear in the list at the foot of the CAR roadcount form.

Some of the Francolins are now Spurfowl, but fortunately that only affects KZN observers (see KZN report below).

Bird Numbers

You should receive a final copy of *Bird Numbers* next year. Sadly the ADU is not able to continue producing and posting this newsletter due to a lack of funding. I really regret this as it has been one way in which we have been able to 'give something back to you' in acknowledgement of all your efforts. There is the possibility of instigating an electronic form, but we are all stretched beyond the limit at present.

ADU observer numbers and mailing list

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, the cost (including postage) is R150.

CAR support

As I mentioned earlier we have been delighted by your support. If you haven't received personal acknowledgement of your donation by email or letter and your name is not listed on the previous page, please do contact me as it means your donation may be sitting in the UCT Donations account "unclaimed". Altogether individual donations amounted to R 10 000 and Bird Club or other NGO donations totalled R 10 450. What is striking is that it is the smaller clubs which have responded. Many thanks to BirdLife Border, Diaz Cross, Graaff-Reinet, Somerset West, St Francis Bay, Tygerberg, Wakkerstroom, West Coast Bird Clubs and William Quinton Wild Bird Society for their donations, as well as Birding Ecotours, Dullstroom Flyfishers and Sani (KZN) branch of Wildlife and Environment Society of South Africa (WESSA) for their support this year.

BirdLife SA has approached a number of corporates for funding for CAR, but to date a sponsor has not been found. I have also been applying for funding. It is proving difficult to source funding for a long-term monitoring project. Proposals for some collaborative research are also submitted.

Thank you to Birding Ecotours for organising an outing to Strandfontein Sewerage Works and donating the proceeds to the ADU.

Barbi Forsyth and Alison Richardson described the Chrissiesmeer and Wakkerstroom counts in their Bird Club newsletter, *Bokmakerie*. Mark Anderson ensured that articles on crane conservation in the Karoo and the presentation of Crane Custodian Boards to landowners appeared in local newspapers; *Diamond Fields Advertiser*, *Griqua Gnu*, *Die Echo* and *Die Volksblad*. Erina Botha wrote an article for the September issue of *South African Country Life* entitled 'Ballerinas of the veld', in which the CAR project receives special mention. The sub-title is 'Efforts to protect the graceful Blue Crane are showing positive results in the Overberg region'. This article is beautifully illustrated by Wicus Leeuwener's photographs. I appreciated the opportunity to submit a report in the Ground Hornbill Working Group newsletter.

If there are other reports or articles which I am unaware of, please send me a copy to include in the annual report.

Ringed birds

Ringed cranes were seen on OV04 (3), OV08 (2), OV13 (3), OV17 (4) and SW14 (1). Do look out for colour-ringed cranes or other species continuously and report details to SAFRING. For details, see the ADU website.

Ground Hornbill Working Group

Do send in details of Southern Ground-Hornbill sightings at any time of year. I will forward them to LD van Essen, the new Project Coordinator for this Working Group. If you know birders in the savannah areas who could set up CAR routes, do let me know.

Thank you!

A big thank you to you all for counting regularly and bearing the rising costs! Sincere thanks to the Precinct Organisers who have continued to be an effective, supportive team helping keep you and CAR on the road.

I am most grateful that Linda Tsipa has been able to continue capturing all the data and editing the tables. As usual Marja Wren-Sargent has done wonders typesetting this newsletter and updating the roadcount forms.

I do wish you special times with family and friends over this summer and peace – travel safely!

*Donella Young,
Project Coordinator*

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 = 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 = Black-bellied Korhaan	UK = Blue Korhaan	KK = Karoo Korhaan
WBK = White-bellied Korhaan	WQK = Whitequilled/Northern Black Korhaan	SG = Spur-winged Goose	SEC = Secretarybird
GH = Southern Ground-Hornbill	BI = Bald/Southern Bald Ibis	HAR = Black Harrier	OR = oribi
BHH = Black-headed Heron	YS = Yellow-billed Stork		

Mistakes and misprints – help us find them!

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.

Gauteng

Seven routes were counted in the Gauteng province! Craig Whittington-Jones, of Gauteng Nature Conservation, has sent me the details of more routes which he and a colleague, Sean West, have reced recently. Craig plans to have about 20 routes counted in January!

Number of birds counted in July 2005 census in Gauteng						
Route	km	ADU No.	Observers	BHH	SG	Other species
GB01	21	931	Francois Wolfaardt	26//		10WQK
GB02	30	931	Francois Wolfaardt			
GD01	66	1987, 1706	Carol Briss & R Coetzee	6//	1//	5WS
GD02	55	2045	Rouxdene Deyssel	1//		3SEC
GH05	58	2039, 2038	Johnny & Andra Hennop			3OR, 4WQK
GW01	52	2048	Gareth Eloff	5//		2RCK, 1WS
Total	281			38	1	3OR,2RCK,3SEC
Birds/100 km				13.5	0.4	6WS,14WQK

GB - Bronkhorstspuit, GD - Devon, GH - Heidelberg, GW - Western Gauteng

Mpumalanga

A reminder that there has been a request from the Oribi Working Group to include Oribi in your counts, while scanning for CAR birds.

Steenkampsberg precinct

The Steenkampsberg precinct had an average winter count. David and Helen Gaynor report that the Wattled Crane pair seen on their route, MS01, was on the same farm as last winter, but in this case was clearly nesting. The 21 Grey Crowned Cranes on Anton and Anje Linström's route were on three adjacent farms, but must be part of the flock of 20 plus known to frequent the area. A lone White Stork was seen by Jim McLuskie, interestingly on the same route on which 3 were observed in July 2003.

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

Unfortunately the data for this precinct is not here yet. Pieter du Plessis saw 3 Grey Crowned Cranes, the first recorded since July 1998 in this precinct.

Standerton precinct

Colin and Nalda Williams saw 147 Blue Cranes and 47 Swainson's Francolin on their route, MT01! White Storks were observed on three routes in this precinct. Kevin and Glynis Armitage counted 121 Black-headed Herons in a heronry on MT02.

Wakkerstroom precinct

John McAllister's route, MW02, had the highest total of Bald Ibis and Grey Crowned Crane in this precinct. The road on MW03 was in 'an appalling condition', unfortunately ripping a tyre! Part of MW05 has become built up and this route will need to be altered or discontinued as it is now dangerous to stop.

Number of birds counted in July census 2005 in Mpumalanga

Route	km	ADU No.	Observers	BC	BHH	BI	CC	SG	UK	HG	Other species
MC01	73	1369	Lester Niss	2//	8//			5//	2//	8//	3SEC
MC02	57.3	1985, 1913	Lauraine & Robert Leigh		5//						10WS
MC03	57.2	1926	Alison Hanson		49/2/			218/7/	4//	98//	2SEC
MC04	71.8	1337, 1370	Malcom & Sylvia Henderson		8//	3//		16//	3//	4//	
MC05	71.5	2058	Iris Hemmings		6//	2//	4//	60//		28//	2SEC
MC06	69	2057	Bill Naude		1//	13//		8//		54//	5WQK
MC07	77.2	1511, 1750	Barbi & Alan Forsyth		1//	4//	3//	8//	14//	47//	2SEC
MS01	56.8	726, 725	David & Helen Gaynor								
MS02	56.2	1726, 1911	Ann des Brulais & N Champion			1//				25//	2SEC
MS05	56.3	728, 1558	Anton Linström & T Steyn		4//		21//			7//	
MS06	64.6	1178	Hendrik van Wyk		2//						
MS08	36.4	2009	Gavin Shaw								
MS09	55	1727	Jim McLuskie		6/2/			1//		64//	1WS
MS13	59	724	Lientjie Cohen							82//	
MT01	85	1816, 1817	Colin & Nalda Williams	147//	10//	3//		69//	5//	121//	47SF
MT02	62.4	1912, 1973	Kevin & Glynis Armitage		129//			43//	1//	207//	26SF, 3WQK, 1WS
MT03	34.5	1986	Dries Schoeman		12//			2//		130//	1SEC, 4SF, 9WS
MT04	36.9	1986	Dries Schoeman		14//			10//		139//	2WS
MW01	58.5	2003, 2018	Ann Cleal & Beverley Thorne	4/1/	3//					30//	1SB
MW02	59.9	1867	John McAllister		3//	42//	62//	34//		16//	1SB
MW03	51.2	2004	Bob Taylor	2//		1//	4//			45//	
MW04	71	2059	Wendy Whitehead		1//	16/2/	2//	31//		69//	1SEC
MW05	70.5	1555, 1001	Lia Steen & Alison Richardson		17//	12//			10//	161//	1SEC, 2WQK
MW06	54	2017	Norman Dennett		5//	13//		2//			1SB
MW07	64	361, 2003	Judy-Lynn Wheeler & A Cleal		3//	2//		4//	29//	218//	
Total	1509			156	291	114	96	518	68	1553	3SB,77SF,14SEC,
Birds/100 km				10.3	19.3	7.55	6.4	34.32	4.5	103	23WS,10WQK

MC - Chrissiesmeer, MS - Steenkampsberg precinct, MT - Standerton precinct, MW - Wakkerstroom precinct

Chrissiesmeer precinct

In this new precinct Alison Hanson and André Benadie saw 51 BHH, most of which were in two heronries on MC03. On a new route, which Barbi and Alan Forsyth reced, they saw 14 Blue Korhaan. On Lauraine Leigh's route 10 White Stork were counted, their last sighting just before their vehicle broke down near the end of their route!

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

Karoo, Northern Cape

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

'During the 21st Karoo Large Terrestrial Bird Survey (KLTBS) on 30 July 2005, 31 people in 17 vehicles counted large terrestrial birds along exactly 1000 km of road in the Northern Cape's eastern Karoo. We are now into the second decade of large terrestrial bird surveys in the eastern Karoo and let's hope that we can maintain the momentum to add another decade of information to our knowledge of these threatened birds.

'A total of 444 large terrestrial birds were seen; therefore 44.4 birds per 100 km. The Blue Crane was by far the most numerous bird species counted, with 300 individuals being recorded. Although large flocks of Blue Cranes are typically observed during the winter months, this year few such aggregations were seen. These included flocks of: 17 and 18 (Francois Taljaard), 28 (Fritz Bättenhaussen), 29 (Luke Kock), 54 (Diana Greathead), and 88 (Luke Kock). The only other two species seen in any numbers were Karoo Korhaan (30) and Northern Black Korhaan (57).

'Overall the number of large terrestrial birds seen was low in relation to previous winters, such as 1203 birds in winter 2004 (111.3 per 100 km), 999 birds in winter 2003 (84.9 per 100 km) and 1551 in winter 2002 (149.1 per 100 km). One can only hypothesize about the reasons for the lower numbers of birds, which includes the particularly dry conditions (and thus probable low food availability) in the eastern Karoo during 2005.

'On the evening prior to the KLTBS a memorable occasion was held in De Aar, at which we presented Crane Custodian Boards to several eastern Karoo farmers who conserve Blue Cranes on their properties. The attractive metal boards were kindly sponsored by Vodacom and the evening was sponsored by the South African Crane Working Group and the Department of Tourism, Environment & Conservation. MEC Pieter Saaiman attended the function and spoke about the important contribution that Northern Cape landowners can make to the conservation of the Province's biodiversity. Thus far Crane Custodian Boards have been presented to 38 eastern Karoo farmers and many of these have been prominently displayed on gates and fences.

'Many thanks to the KLTBS participants for their contributions, and to Ronelle Visagie for her help with coordination of these bi-annual surveys and for the organization of the De Aar Crane Custodian Board function.'

Congratulations to all those who received a Crane Custodian Board. I encourage you to continue counting regularly as your region is the main area in which cranes can still be found in natural vegetation. More than 25% of the world's population resides in the eastern Karoo. Thank you to Mark and Ronelle for their commitment to this project.



Western Cape

Swartland precinct

Over 1000 Blue Cranes were counted in the Swartland with the density of 123.6 birds/100 km. The enormous flock which we saw on SW01 was the largest ever for a Swartland route.

As mentioned above mist delayed the start of some routes, visibility on two routes was so poor that some of the route was not counted. SW09 and SW14 were counted a week late due to thick mist. It was a delight to see the Swartland looking so green after the drought of recent years. On SW02 Sean and Louise Tucker remarked on a proliferation of vineyards, particularly in the first half of the route and that there seems to have been a change in bird life. Bruce MacKenzie and Mel Tripp noted that grape vines were gradually being introduced on their route, SW08. Cheryl Seeley and Ian Mileham counted a new route, SW16. Jan Hofmeyr recorded 20 White Storks on the pig farm on the CAR day. Although no White Storks were seen on the routes on CAR day, there was a report in the West Coast Bird Club newsletter of 15 between Velddrif and Vredenburg on 4 August.



Number of birds counted in July 2005 census in Karoo										
Route	km	ADU No.	Observers	BC	KK	LB	SEC	UK	WQK	Other Species
NK021	20	486	Luke Kock		2//	3//			2//	
NK022	20	486	Luke Kock	9//	2//		1//			
NK023	20	486	Luke Kock	134//	2//	3//	2//		2//	
NK041	20	501	Francois Taljaard							
NK042	20	501	Francois Taljaard							
NK044	20	501	Francois Taljaard	38//						
NK061	20	494	Fritz Bättenhaussen	2/2/						
NK062	20	494	Fritz Bättenhaussen	28//		1//			1//	
NK063	20	494	Fritz Bättenhaussen					4//		
NK071	20	1580	Petrus van der Merwe							
NK072	20	1580	Petrus van der Merwe						4//	
NK073	20	1580	Petrus van der Merwe						3//	
NK091	20	480	Peter Ferreira		6/1/					3SG
NK092	20	480	Peter Ferreira							
NK093	20	480	Peter Ferreira						2//	
NK101	20	1952	David Khakhane	3//					3//	
NK102	20	1952	David Khakhane						7//	
NK103	20	1952	David Khakhane							
NK111	20	1954	JP du Plessis						1//	
NK112	20	1954	JP du Plessis							
NK113	20	1954	JP du Plessis							
NK141	20	499	Henri Smith					6//		
NK142	20	499	Henri Smith		6//					
NK143	20	499	Henri Smith							
NK151	20	1898	Marisa van der Merwe		2//				3//	
NK152	20	1898	Marisa van der Merwe							
NK153	20	1898	Marisa van der Merwe							
NK171	20	667	Abie de Villiers						1//	2BHH, 8SG
NK172	20	667	Abie de Villiers							1BHH
NK173	20	667	Abie de Villiers	3//				3//		
NK181	20	1579	Diana Greathead	10//					3//	
NK182	20	1579	Diana Greathead	42/12/					2//	3SB
NK183	20	1579	Diana Greathead		2//	5//				
NK211	20	2047	Dorriane du Toit						2//	
NK212	20	2047	Dorriane du Toit		3//				4//	
NK213	20	2047	Dorriane du Toit							
NK221	20	105	Mark Anderson		5//				3//	
NK222	20	105	Mark Anderson						4//	
NK223	20	105	Mark Anderson				1//		1//	
NK231	20	509	Ronelle Visagie						3//	
NK232	20	509	Ronelle Visagie						2//	
NK233	20	509	Ronelle Visagie							
NK271	20	1952	David Khakhane						3//	
NK272	20	1952	David Khakhane							
NK391	20	493	Lorette Luscombe	13//	7//				1//	1BHH
NK392	20	493	Lorette Luscombe	2//						
NK393	20	493	Lorette Luscombe							
NK451	20	1490	Madeleine van Heerden	2//	2//					
NK452	20	1490	Madeleine van Heerden							
NK453	20	1490	Madeleine van Heerden							
Total	1000			300	40	12	4	13	57	4BHH, 3SB,
Birds/100 km				30	4	1.2	0.4	1.3	5.7	11SG

Number of birds counted in July census 2005 in Swartland							
Route	km	ADU No.	Observers	BC	BHH	SG	Other species
SW01	74.7	1970, 991, 2010	Fiona Hellmann, D Young & L Tsipa	381//	8//	65//	3BK
SW02	77	503, 1077	Sean & Louise Tucker			18//	
SW03	63.7	574, 1080	Sylvia Ledgard & Pat Waddell	140//	2//	26//	
SW04	66	1286, 1287	Philbert & Henrietta Melck	24//		22//	
SW05	44.7	163, 1239	Keith & Rena Harrison	54//		49//	1LB
SW06	77.2	1368, 1359, 1366, 1122	Ralph Wordon & Team	33/4/	1/1/	20//	
SW07	14	477	Koos de Goede		3//	7//	
SW08	65.4	1474, 106	Bruce MacKenzie & Mel Tripp	16//	16/3/	21//	1SEC
SW09	62	1135, 1467	Jens & Diane Oelbützel	57//		61//	1HAR
SW10	64.8	2030	Pieter Bruwer	43//		16/1/	5BS, 1HAR, 1SEC
SW11	62	2031, 2032	Henk & Angel ten Hoom-Boer	21//		14//	3BK
SW12	79.5	1552, 1553	Tielman & Alta Klynsmith	48//	1//	23//	5BK
SW13	51.5	673	Elna Slabber	113/11/	2//	175//	
SW14	52.7	2033	Jaco van Deventer	112//	2//	30//	2SEC
Total	855			1057	38	543	11BK, 5BS, 2HAR,
Birds/100 km				123.6	4.4	63.5	1LB, 4SEC
SW15	58.3	2006	Angela Oelbützel	19//	6//	10//	
SW16	43.9	1191, 2051	Ian Mileham & Cheryl Seeley		2/1/	16//	2BK

Number of birds counted in July census 2005 in Overberg										
Route	km	ADU No.	Observers	BC	BHH	KK	SB	SEC	SG	Other species
OV01	57	221, 222	Des & Mary Frylinck	36//	7//				9//	
OV02	67	221, 222	Des & Mary Frylinck	109/18/	6//				16//	1BK
OV03	48.7	214	Freya Brett	12/1/	13//		4//		14//	
OV04	26.9	214	Freya Brett	363/59/	2//				12//	
OV05	69.8	228, 1148	John Carter & Team	252/10/	11//	17//	8//	2//	28//	
OV06	50.3	619, 1655	Patrick Hurly, S McLennan & team	354//	9//		12//	2//	38//	9BK
OV07	67	496, 1083, 801, 802	Ken & Anne Price, K & A McAdam	364/18/	24//	4//	5//		16//	1HAR, 13WS
OV08	73.1	492, 1075	Keith & Michelle Moodie	1337/1/	45//	6//	37//		21//	13WS
OV09	45.5	234, 239	Craig Thom & Bruce Squier	455//	5//		1//		47//	
OV10	56	56, 1585	Pieter & Ann Albertyn	122//	8//		2//	1//	3//	
OV11	62.2	245, 246, 244	Sheila & Peter Siebert & M Loubser	8/2/	3//		1//		22//	
OV12	57.1	215, 216, 1380, 1381	H Busby, Dawn, Gill & Rory	241//	11//		39//		22//	
OV13	70	229, 671, 672, 1063	Inés Cooke, A White, R Lind & P Rigg	527/13/	48//	18//	52//		33//	2BK, 1HAR, 1WS
OV14	86	123, 1922	John Coats & Maureen Aucamp	597/122/	12//	4//			203//	2BK
OV15	57.2	255, 256	Dave & Sue Whitelaw	296//	14//		3//	2//	12//	2BK, 1HAR, 30WS
OV16	61.8	249, 1379	Pierre van den Berg & Willem du Toit	223//	23/2/	9/2/	5//		4//	108WS
OV17	66	878	Lee Burman	128//	6//				79/6/	
OV18	50	240, 1712	Wicus & Hanlie Leeuwner	233//	3//				25//	
OV19	62	219, 1213	Ronnie Crowther & Estelle Stodel	149/1/	17//				19//	
OV20	57.6	1441	Alison Passmore	99/6/	13/2/		2//		16//	
OV21	63.9	1440, 1840, 1981	Alex & Nancy Swanepoel & M Vlok	27//	7//		6//		2//	2HAR
OV23	55.6	1062	Andrew Marshall	2//	30/1/				43//	
OV24	57.5	636, 1212	Mick D'Alton & Gerald Swanepoel		5//		24//		12//	2BK, 1HAR
OV25	34.7	1777, 1778	Rae & Ann Gordon	4//	5//		3//		12//	1BK
OV26	19	878	Lee Burman	6//					4//	
OV27	72	1942, 1947	Louis Witbooi & Team		23//		20//	1//	139//	1WS
OV28	41	1462, 1825	Tonia & Flip Schonken	2//	4//		1//		5//	
OV29	26.3	214	Freya Brett	146/15/	4//				2//	
OV33	61	1463	Frans de Graaff & family		10//		13//	4//	8//	
Total	1622			6358	373	60	238	12	872	19BK,6HAR,
Birds/100 km				391.9	23.0	3.7	14.7	0.7	53.8	166WS
OV34	61	1550, 1551	Heynè & Sharon Brink		14//		3//		4//	4BK, 9HAR
OV35	23	1469	Avril Young	18//	2//				13//	

Overberg precinct

In this precinct there was an amazing total of 6358 Blue Cranes or 392 birds/100 km. The previous highest densities have been just over 270 birds/100 km in July 2003 and 2004 (see trends on website by clicking on Blue Crane in table at foot of CAR webpage). There were nine routes with over 250 cranes with Keith & Michelle Moodie's route, OV08, between the N2 and Witsands recording 1338! What is interesting is that these high totals were on routes OV04 to OV09 and OV13 to OV15, all routes south of N2 from just after Caledon to Swellendam, except for two. Keith reported that some farmers have mentioned that there have been many large flocks this winter, probably due to the good rains this season leading to 'excellent crops and pasture'. A number of people remarked on the extent of cultivation as well. In 11 years of CAR participation Heather Busby's team had never seen so much water lying in sheets in the area, nor such an abundance of water birds.

Denham's Bustard numbers were also encouraging with OV13 recording 52 and OV12, recording their highest total ever (39). On OV16 Pierre van den Berg saw 108 White Storks and 11 Black Korhaan. This is the highest number of storks seen on an Overberg route in winter and storks were recorded on five other routes, with 30 seen by Dave and Sue Whitelaw. Are more storks over-wintering or are these early arrivals? Since July 2002 storks have been recorded in winter in numbers exceeding the odd individual.

Details about gathering on Wicus and Hanlie's farm after the summer count are enclosed.

News from the Overberg Crane Group

Over the past few years the Overberg Crane Group has received feedback from the Swartland via the CAR Count, National Crane Census etc. about observations of Blue Cranes in lupin fields during the winter months. The general perception seems to be that the cranes are doing damage to the lupin plant but because there is no permanent field worker in that area it has been difficult to immediately follow up and verify these reports.

It is also not possible to compare the situation to the Overberg because Blue Cranes are almost never seen in lupin camps there. They congregate in the pastures especially where sheep or ostriches are fed on a regular basis. Investigated cases of cranes trampling/damaging growing grain crops (oat, maize & barley) has always led to an underlying cause i.e. insect infestation e.g. bollworm or poor/uneven/sparse germination.

After consultation with nature conservation services managers and agricultural consultants in the area the general opinion is that the cranes are not doing any actual damage to the plants but rather feeding off insects on the vegetation. However it would be in the best interests of both cranes and farmers to verify this and document the reasons why the Blue Cranes are so often seen in lupin fields in the Swartland, but never in the Overberg. Hence the Overberg Crane Group wish to thank CAR participants for their ongoing crane observations and requests that they please continue in 2006.

Kevin Shaw and Vicki Hudson

Beaufort West precinct

Maria Andela recorded another high total of Karoo Korhaan on WB01.

Little Karoo precinct

I haven't received the results yet.

Uniondale precinct

Jonas Witbooi saw 7 White Storks on WU04. Mike and Gill Euston-Brown & Barry du Plessis saw a Black harrier on WU05, the first Mike has seen in the past seven years. Odette Curtis, who studies Black Harriers, said they had reports of these harriers in drier areas that had received good rains.

Welcome to Natalie Baker and Paul Buccholz, of Cape Nature, who now coordinate this precinct, as Peter Chadwick is now at De Hoop. Thank you to Peter for his assistance and for continuing his involvement in CAR. Paul arranged for a recce count along the old Cape road beyond Wilderness. Only Black-headed Herons were recorded.

Number of birds counted in July census in 2005 in Western Cape										
Route	km	ADU No.	Observers	BC	BHH	KK	SG	Other spp.		
WB01	65	343	Maria Andela	2//		33//		1KB, 1LB		
WB03	59	1909, 1971	Stefan & Hannatjie Theron	25/1/		10//		4LB		
WC01	43	1291, 1989	George Hattingh & T Robertson		1//			3BK, 3SB		
WC02	55	1999, 2027	Elton le Roux & Jan Oransie	6//	1//					
WU01	53	1392	J de Jaar	9/1/	3//			5KB		
WU02	57	539	Jonas Witbooi	45//	2//			9SB		
WU03	50	1606	Natalie Baker		1/1/			2BK		
WU04	35	539	Jonas Witbooi	5//	7//		7//	7WS		
WU05	70	297, 1520, 1521	Mike & G Euston-Brown & Barry	73//	6//			1HAR, 14SB		
WU06	13	539	Jonas Witbooi		3//		2//			
WU07	70	1952	David Khakhane	2//			3//3	1SB		
Total	569			169	25	43	15	5BK,1HAR,6KB,		
Birds/100 km				29.7	4.4	7.6	2.6	5LB,27SB,7WS		

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

Calitzdorp precinct

George Hattingh commented that bird numbers were very low, possibly because flood irrigation had been stopped while farmers prune vines and fruit trees. The new route, WC02 was successfully counted.

Number of birds counted in July census 2005 in Eastern Cape												
Route	km	ADU No.	Observers	BC	BHH	BK	CC	LB	SB	SEC	SG	Other species
EB01	62.4	175, 175	Kenneth & Gertie Griffith		14//		15//		8//	1//	2//	
EB02	73	1398	Keith Marshall		6//				3//	2//	26//	
EB03	67.2	115	Graham Winch	5//	3//		10//		1//	1//	3//	
EB04	63.7	1567, 1568, 1584	Barbara & Ken Monfoort & Wendy Perks		8//		6/2//		5//	1//	2//	1WS
EE01	45	1730	Helen Lechmere-Oertel									2WC
EE02	74	1967, 1730	John Filmer & Helen Lechmere-Oertel	2//								
EE03	26.2	2008	Carole Sephton		4//		299/4//					
EE06	63	895	Johannes van Rooyen				2//		2/2//	1//		
EE08	67	1730	Helen Lechmere-Oertel		3//		21/2//				8//	
EE10	65	899	Kevin Meise									
EE11	55	1261	Mike Agenbag		4//		23//					
EE17	36.6	1419	Mike Tegg	3//			5//				50/1//	
EE18	43.9	1918, 1919	Les & Andrian Larter				4//				34//	6UK
EE19	84.6	1130, 1583	Sandy & Hope Stretton	5//	4//					2//	7//	31UK
EE20	59.8	896	Fred Leask				12//				6//	
EG02	59	565	Pat Hulley	2//	1//				2//	1//		
EG03	77.2	341	Bo Bonnevie	2//		4//		4//				4KB
EG04	65	161	Adrian Craig	6//				4//				
EH03	61.2	1768, 1771	Liz Horne & Wendy Rosser	112/4//	25//				12//		34//	
EH04	44.5	1132, 1767, 1766, 1976	David & Jill Tudhope, P & M Bosman		2//				4//	1//		
EH05	39	1612, 1794, 301	Abel & Henny Bezuidenhout & C Cook	51//	1//				13//		4//	
EH06	57.1	312, 1795, 1974, 1773	Yvonne Craig, A & M Jones & J Dale	3//	48/2//				28//	3//	22//	4WBK
EK02	42.2	1523, 1525	Allan Wilson & Tim Cockroft		4//				5//		2//	8OR
EK04	60	884	Peter Metcalf		4//					1//		4OR
EK05	62.5	886, 1528, 1527	Maureen Turner, L Wood & J Roxburg		32//				19//		1//	1WBK, 8WS
EP01	74	635, 1244	Patrick Brett & Denise Hoffmann	44/6//	2//	9//		36//		5//		7KB, 8KK
EP02	66.6	1570, 1621, 83	Hermann & Terry Hertel & Andy Nixon	60/1//	1//	15//		4//		2//		5KB
EP03	61	872	Denzil Ward	63/3//		1//		6//		2//		2KK
EP04	73.7	869, 271	Peter Hall & E Sauer	57//		6//		9//		1//		10KK
EP07	73	1475	Alan Collett									6WQK
EP08	109	270	Dave Brown	8//		2//		41//		1//	1//	15KB, 22KK
EP10	43.4	1731	John Bowker	35//				2//		4//		7KK, 20WQK
EP11	48.3	1852, 195	Briar Wright & Phil Whittington		7//	1//				3//		
EQ02	54	930, 1290	Don Field & Brian Elison				4//	8//				10UK
ES02	48	2063	Braam Basson	3//								5KK
ES04	46	2040, 2041	Walter & Ann Murray	8//								4KK
ES05	88.7	1182, 2005, 1965, 1966	Neil & Ros Turner & Bill & Alison Brown		4//	2//		5//		1//		1KB
ES07	35.3	1826	Debbie Abrahamson		1//							
ES08	82	875, 2019	Neville & Carmen Willows	562//		6//		41//				5KB, 2KK
ES10	26	2044	Desmond Schroeder	345/35//	1//							
EU01	65.9	1479	Emile Plumstead		7//				12/1//			
Total	2449			1425	188	46	409	160	117	33	203	37KB, 60KK, 12OR, 47UK
Birds/100 km				58.2	7.7	1.9	16.7	6.5	4.8	1.3	8.3	2WC, 9WS, 5WBK, 26WQK
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 - Somers East precinct, EU - Umtata precinct												

Eastern Cape

A reminder that there has been a request from the Oribi Working Group to include Oribi in your counts, while scanning for CAR birds.

Ken and Gertie Griffith saw 15 Grey Crowned Cranes, the highest total for EB01 since counts began in winter 1998. The large heronry at Witches Krantz is no longer in use, for no apparent reason. Graham Winch has usually recorded at least one Black Harrier on his route, but this last count none were seen. A lone White Stork was counted on EB04.

Some of the routes in the northeastern Eastern Cape precinct were very dry. Grey Crowned Cranes were observed on most of the EE routes, with Carole Sephton recording 303! In the Humansdorp precinct conditions were extremely dry this winter and the pasture areas looked particularly dry and barren. A feature in this part of the world is the increasing number of game sightings all along EH06. Yvonne Craig and her team saw 28 Denham's Bustards.

Maureen Turner saw 4 White Stork on EK05 and 19 Denham's Bustard. The only Oribi reported in the Eastern Cape were on two Kenton-on-Sea routes. On EP01 Patrick Brett and Denise Hoffmann saw 36 Ludwig's Bustards and 50 Blue Cranes, as well as other species. Their route was in an area which had received good rains and the veld was in fine condition. Dave Brown saw 15 Kori Bustards and 41 Ludwig's Bustards on his route, EP08, near Aberdeen! The CAR results seem to indicate higher numbers of Kori Bustard in winter than summer. On EG03 I was glad to see Bo Bonnevie recorded 4 Kori Bustard, the highest total for an EG route since July 2000.

Neville Willows had the incredible total of 562 Blue Cranes on his new route, ES08, as well as 5 Kori Bustard and 41 Ludwig's Bustard. Forty of the Ludwig's Bustards and 375 of the Blue Cranes are regularly on a lucerne land on a particular farm where he discovered the landowner leaves the lucerne for the birds. Des and Martie Schroeder reced a new route on the Craddock road which also had a high total of Blue Cranes (380). Bradley Gibbons, of the South African Crane Working Group, started a new route near Middleburg. Patrick Palmer, Chairperson of the Graaff-Reinet Bird Club, reced a new route near Graaff-Reinet. I am delighted that more routes are being established in the Eastern Cape, filling in some of the 'gaps'.



Fiona Hellmann,
Meyrick Barker and
Linda Tsipa counting SW01

Number of birds counted in July census 2005 in Kwa Zulu-Natal												
Route	km	ADU No.	Observers	BC	BHH	BI	CC	HG	SB	SEC	SG	Other species
KC01	50.9	433	Malcolm Gemmell		3//		31//		11//		19//	1BBK, 2WS
KD01	82	1829	FJ Cloete		2//	4//	2//					2WBK
KD02	63	1255, 1745	Dennis & Sonja Holmes	2//						2//	6//	4WBK
KD03	74	807, 1830	Peter Dearlove & Tinkie Muller									
KD04	52	736, 1179	Tony & Val Cross		2//							
KD05	52	677, 1711	Paul & Bev Garner		6//			161//			15//	
KD06	50	1709, 1755	Myles & Carol Ellerker		2//						8//	
KD07	70	909	Heino Wellmann		2//	7//				2//		
KD08	63	1834	Peter Struweg								15//	
KD10	26	611	Tony Roberts									
KD11	58	611, 1832, 1833	Tony, Brenden & Curteis Roberts	2//	2//	3//						
KD12	62	611, 1832, 1833	Tony, Brenden & Curteis Roberts					156//				
KE01	111	1602, 2013	Rose Laatz, E Bucceri & 5 learners	2//	4//	12//					4//	
KE03	65	744	Jeanette Wood									
KG02	53.1	623, 1073	Brian Byers & Pat Lowry		3//		10//	74//			48//	
KG03	53	626	Malcolm Rivett	2//			60//				24//	
KG04	73.4	627	Bob Williams		3//		7/2//	130//	2//	3//	9//	
KG05	55.9	629, 1134	Stooks Wilton & Stiggs Cathcart		3//		6//	27//			35/6//	
KG06	57.8	1536, 1537	John & Val Baxter		8//	10//	8//	107//	9//		10//	
KG07	50	631	Mark Meter	5//	1//		36//				43//	
KG08	63	630	Kobus Nel		3//		113//	120//	1//	2//	315//	
KG09	11	427, 428	Bruce & Pat Whittle		2//		3//				48//	10WC
KG10	36.3	1240, 1241	Ed & Myra Wells				166//	24//				
KG11	53.7	632, 633	Jimmy & Lorraine Scott		2//		169/2//	54//			17//	5WC
KL01	91.1	50, 142, 1597	Ken Gordon, Neil Smith & K Immelman	13/3//	5//		2//	118//	2//		16//	3NF, 17OR, 6SF, 1UK, 2WBK
KL11	34	814	Ann Gray & 10 learners		6//		6//	10/7//				
KM01	75.1	1719, 1720	Erwin & Helen Burnmeister	6//	4//		2//	107//	3//		26//	5WC, 1WS
KM02	65.2	498	Margie Sleigh	14//	4//	25//	2//	26/6//		1//	11//	2OR, 2WC
KM03	101	1887, 1888	Alan & Bernardine Turner		48//		19//	20//			51//	2OR, 4RNF
KM04	35	1885	Elizabeth Martens		1//			26//		2//	9//	5OR
KM05	83.6	474, 1581, 1905	S Bennett, E. Hughes & G Densham		6//	3//	10//				6//	
KM06	88.8	167, 1610	Pamela Nicol & Betty Jones	3//	10//			15//		1//	51/7//	1NF
KM07	65.5	490, 1843	Kevin & Lindy McCann		8//					1//	10//	
KM08	58	187, 1828	Monte & Eunice Pera	3//	9//	7//	3//	92//	2//		231//	3OR, 1WBK, 8WS
KN01	62.7	927, 1756	Johan & Christine de Villiers			1//						5SF
KN03	55.2	1609, 1754	Andre & Hettie Bouwer		4//	7//		39//			3//	1RWF, 2WBK
KN04	47.5	925	Alan Schwikkard		9//						36//	3SF, 3WBK
KN05	41.2	1071, 1742	John & Kathy Sharpe			11//		18//	1//			2BBK, 2SF, 2SHF
KN06	52	2036, 2037	Klaus & Miemie Heyer		2//		5//	101//		2//	1//	
KO01	49.6	425, 1529, 431, 1963, 2005	G & S Calverley, D & K Leitch, S. Calitz		5//			37//				4CF, 3GH
KP01	66.7	2064	Simon Zwane		5//	11//				1//	71//	1WS
KP02	42.9	1792	Frik Lemmer		2//	8//						1SF
KU01	68	429, 1961, 2015	Chris Thomas, Alan Abrey & G Ellison	2//	17//	4//	31//	12//	4//	1//	3//	2WC, 9WS
KU02	68	1741	Carol Horne	2//	6//		3//	15//		1//	144//	7OR, 2WC
KV01	82.1	1683	AP Keeve		6//	26//	7//		2//		21//	1BBK, 1WBK
KV02	60.6	2016	Paul Steffensen		2//			18//			3//	3SF
KV03	61.5	1566	Darryl Baxter		20//			54//			5/1//	8SF
KV04	34.6	1790, 1791	Arlene Steyn & David MacLennan									
Total	2876			59	227	139	705	1537	37	19	1328	4BBK, 4CF, 4NF, 36OR,
Birds/100 km				2.1	7.9	4.8	24.5	53.5	1.3	0.7	46.2	4RNF, 1RWF, 28SF, 2SHF,
												1UK, 26WC, 21WS, 15WBK

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

KwaZulu-Natal

As mentioned above, **some gamebirds have had their names changed**, so do refer to the list below for the **new abbreviations** while doing your count.

Bird numbers were encouraging after the low numbers in summer due to long grass and poor visibility. White Storks were recorded on five routes and Helmeted Guineafowl numbers were up. Swainson's Francolin numbers were at their highest.

The Calverley's saw three Southern Ground-Hornbills on KO01. Malcolm Gemmell recorded that three Southern Ground-Hornbills were seen feeding by a farmer on a carcass on a farm in the Creighton area. I also received a report of 15 Southern Ground-Hornbills seen on the Drakensberg Choir School grounds at dusk, not ideal conditions for counting.

Jeanette Wood was able to count KE03 for the first time since January 2002, but no birds were recorded, the route has become very densely populated. Johan and Christine de Villiers remarked on increasing human settlement along KN01, particularly near Zaaihoek dam, leading to a decrease in birds, particularly the larger birds like korhaans and bustards.

Wattled Cranes were seen on two routes in each of the

Swartberg, Midlands and Underberg precincts. Jimmy and Lorraine Scott reported seeing two pairs near nest sites. One site is an old one, now back in use by a new pair. Kobus Nel saw two Goliath Herons on KG08.

I am delighted that Rose Laatz (KE01) and Ann Gray (KL11) were able to take learners counting with them. Rose has been able to initiate an enthusiastic group of birders at St Gregory School who often report on birds seen at home.

Malcolm Gemmell counted 16 Oribi on his route KC01 and Ken Gordon saw 17 on his route near Ladysmith. On the Midlands routes 12 Oribi were seen.

Frik Lemmer, of KZN Wildlife, has started a new route, KP02, in the savannah biome in the Pongola area, but no Southern Ground-Hornbills were seen.

Do continue to count Oribi. In KZN gamebirds are also counted; use the abbreviations **HG** for Helmeted Guineafowl, **CF** for Crested Francolin, **SS** for Swainson's Spurfowl, **NS** for Natal Spurfowl, **RNS** for Red-necked Spurfowl, **RWF** for Red-winged Francolin, **GWF** for Grey-winged Francolin and **SHF** for Shelley's Francolin.

Thank you to Tim Wood for ensuring that CAR runs smoothly in KZN.



Winterton Primary School Outdoor Club assisting Ann Gray counting KL11