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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 21

December 2006

Bird watching is more than a hobby or a sport; it is a way to connect with the serenity and beauty of nature.

Anonymous (*BirdLife Eastern Cape News*, August 2006)

General

CAR is still running and there is, at last, growing hope of it continuing to move into the future. It is the vulnerability of bird populations to climate and environmental changes that is drawing more support for monitoring. As in days of old, when canaries were taken into mines to give people advance warning of deterioration in air quality, bird populations are indicating change, giving us humans a global warning. I would encourage you to see the film **An Inconvenient Truth** in which Al Gore paints the picture of global warming and its effects. The film is advertised as a 'global warning' and clearly demonstrates how we are reaching a point where we as humans and most other species are now facing the consequences of our actions. WWF has also just brought out a sobering report, *Bird Species and Climate Change*, which you can find on: http://www.panda.org/about_wwf/what_we_do/climate_change/index.cfm?unewsid=86460

This global conservation organization believes that the current approach to bird conservation, focused on protecting specific areas with high bird diversity, will fail because climate change will force birds to shift into unprotected zones (which places a significant focus on the management of privately owned land). WWF is suggesting a major change in approach to bird conservation. On their website there is also a list of 10 practical things that we can do. In brief:

1. **Switch to renewable energy wherever possible.**
2. **Buy energy efficient appliances.**
3. **Use fluorescent lamps** – they are much cheaper in the long run.
4. **Avoid stand-by mode** on TV, computer and other electrical appliances (which uses 10–60% of normal power) and **turn off lights.**
5. **Wash economically** i.e. only full loads and economy programme.
6. **Fridge.** Don't leave fridge doors open for longer than necessary, let food cool down fully before putting it in the fridge or freezer, defrost regularly.
7. **Share lifts on your way to work and school, walk or cycle wherever possible.**
8. **Car.** When buying a car, select a fuel-efficient, environmentally friendly one. This will save you money and keep more carbon dioxide from going into the atmosphere.
9. **Reduce your air travel.** This contributes to significant emissions of climate change-causing carbon dioxide.
10. **Enjoy the sun!** Fit solar panels on the roof of your home. Turn your home into a clean power station!

"We can all do something right away. And if we all do, something will undoubtedly change."

Date of summer CAR count

The date set for the summer count is **Saturday, 27 January 2007**. 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, 28 July 2007.

Count information

As you will discover under CAR Support, the funding comes with a number of deliverables that will keep us dancing on our toes. I would really appreciate it if you could all check your roadcount forms very carefully before submitting them to make sure

that you have used the appropriate abbreviations and filled in all the details, particularly habitat and the details at the top of the form. This will save us much time when checking and capturing the data, without having to follow up queries. Also do make a conspicuous note if you are ever unable to complete your route for any reason or do it in a different direction.

Thankfully the weather was fine throughout the country for the winter count. I am a bit concerned about the number of routes that are counted by only one person. Please do find someone to assist you, as it really helps to have extra eyes and counting does expose more people to these special birds. Do consider taking older children or farm workers or city dwellers with you.

Do refresh your memory by reading through the Information Sheets prior to the count and take them with you, as well as your **route map**.

The **CAR 12 roadcount form**, with the new species codes and logos and a **CAR leaflet** are enclosed. The leaflet is useful to hand out to farmers or other interested people.

Do continue to count oribi 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.

Please send in your data by the middle of March, but always, **always** keep a copy yourself!

Photographs of habitat

Thank you to those of you who have sent photographs of habitat along their routes. If you haven't sent photographs it is not too late! Please note the date, route number and km (GPS coordinates too, if you have them). This is optional!

Email addresses

Please note that my email address has changed. We have had problems with distribution lists, so if you didn't receive an email about the website report on the winter count, do send me your email address.

Project material on the website

If you are missing project material such as **Information Sheets**, or need extra CAR leaflets to hand out, these can be downloaded from the foot of the CAR webpage. Project material is available in Afrikaans as well. The **interim CAR winter count report** is also here, with colour photos, as well as past **newsletters**.

Useful websites

www.birds.sanbi.org species lists for reserves
www.sanbi.org/consfarm/cfindex.htm Conservation Farming Project. Some of the reports under Results are very large files; do contact me.
www.ewt.org.za
www.mabulagroundhornbillconservationproject.org.za

Updating the trends of all species

The trends for the species in the Overberg and Swartland precincts have been updated on the website. Click on species in the table at the foot of the CAR webpage for these. The capture of all the new routes onto GIS is most time-consuming, but I hope to enlist the help of a volunteer next year, which will speed up the process. Hopefully by the end of next year the trends in all precincts will be on the website.



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:

Korhaans: Blue = UK

Karoo = KK

White-bellied = WBK

Black-bellied = BBK

Southern Black/Black = SBK

Northern Black/Whitequilled = NBK

Bustards: Kori = KB

Ludwig's = LB

Denham's/Stanley's = DB

Storks: Black = BS

White = WS

Abdim's = AS

Yellow-billed = YS

Cranes: Blue = BC

Grey Crowned = CC

Wattled Crane = WC

Southern Ground-Hornbill = GH

Southern Bald Ibis = BI

Spur-winged Goose = SG

Secretarybird = SEC

Black-headed Heron = BHH

Black Harrier = HAR

Mistakes and misprints: please help us find them!

Please check the figures given for your route in this newsletter against your records, and report any discrepancies.

oribi = OR

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 contact 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

At long last there is some better news on this front and more hope that CAR will have 'fuel' for the future.

The ADU is most grateful to the South African National Biodiversity Institute (SANBI) for funding through the Birds and Environmental Change Partnership. Phoebe Barnard, of SANBI, has submitted the following:



"Climate change has been a vivid feature of the world news in November. First there was the UK Government's release of the influential Stern Review on the Economics of Climate Change, which emphasized that climate change is a serious and urgent issue, with African countries particularly feeling the damage, and that all countries need urgently to develop technology and economic instruments to help cope. Then, the world met in Nairobi in mid-late November to discuss the framework for further emissions controls under the UN Framework Convention

on Climate Change, a meeting which was widely held as a disappointment in the levels of progress it achieved. Our partners at SANBI are active in highlighting the serious impacts of climate change on biodiversity in this and other platforms. Together with Dr Res Altwegg of the ADU, SANBI's Global Change & Biodiversity Programme is identifying a series of long-term southern African bird databases which can be analysed to give us a better understanding of how climate change, land use change and other pressures may affect birds with different life history strategies, and what this means for their population trends and conservation status."

Early next year we will be conducting a review of our projects, together with SANBI and in June a workshop is scheduled.

I am delighted that CAR has been awarded an African Bird Club Conservation Award. The African Bird Club (ABC) is a registered UK Charity that raises money to support conservation projects in Africa and runs an extensive web site www.africanbirdclub.org. The ABC's conservation programme supports small conservation projects in Africa, provided they meet their criteria. Since 1996, it has supported a wide variety of projects including training courses, research into threatened species and promotion and awareness of conservation issues in Africa.

James Harrison and I are encouraged that a project proposal, Big Birds on Farms (BBOF), submitted to the Critical Ecosystem Partnership Fund has been accepted. This funding will enable us to take the results of the CAR project in the Cape Floristic Region (CFR), a biodiversity hotspot, a significant step further. BBOF will promote private sector and community involvement in conservation in agricultural landscapes within and surrounding the CFR biodiversity corridors. This will be achieved by promoting best practice in land management for the stewardship of biodiversity. This will involve consultation with landowners, conservancies, Cape Nature and others within the agricultural sector to assess their needs and constraints and assist in developing recommendations regarding conservation and management of biodiversity. At a later stage a series of public presentations and workshops with the agricultural and conservation extension staff will communicate and ensure implementation of the findings, together with a published booklet, poster and website, followed by a follow-up survey. We will collaborate with Odette Curtis, who is coordinating



a project on gamebirds and biodiversity, in consulting with target groups in the initial stages of the project and in compiling the booklet, poster and giving public presentations and workshops with agricultural and conservation extension staff. **We would be most grateful for any input on your part.**

In July I was flown up to the planning workshop for the Darwin Initiative project coordinated by the South African Crane Working Group and the Zoological Society of London. Putting new routes onto GIS in order to update species trends is the main task in fulfilling the ADU's contribution to this project.



Some committed birders had the idea of sponsoring 'a Rand a bird' for their count and made an appropriate, and very welcome, contribution to our CAR resources. Maybe some of you would like to run with this idea.

Thank you to those who have written articles about CAR. Barbi Forsyth gave an interesting account of the Chrissiesmeer counts in the Wits Bird Club newsletter, *Bokmakierie*. Lorraine Mullins, Bo Bonnevie and Jenny Gon described their CAR day in the *Diaz Diary*, and Carol Horne wrote an article about the "Cranes galore on Cedarville Flats" in *KZN Birds*. Yvonne Craig has continued to increase awareness of our large birds in *Our Times*, a local newspaper.

Thank you so much for your donations!

Border BirdLife, Deon Coetzee, Linda du Toit and Western Cape Birding Forum, Inés and Duncan Cooke.

Ringed birds

Ringed cranes were seen on OV04 and OV29. Do look out for colour-ringed cranes or other species all through the year and report details to SAFRING. For details, see the ADU website. Whenever you find a dead bird, do check for rings. **The section for ringed birds on the CAR form is now on the back page.**

White Storks

As you will see from the results there is an increase in over-wintering White Storks. Jan Hofmeyer, a volunteer here at the ADU, is very keen to receive any information regarding breeding White Storks. This species has a bulky nest and is known to breed with or close to herons, but the red beak and legs are distinctive. Please contact Jan (021-6863047) or myself. At present we only know of active nests at Tygerberg Zoo and one near Bredasdorp.

Ground Hornbill Working Group

A single Southern Ground Hornbill was recorded on a new CAR route in the Kruger. If you have friends in other parts of the savannah biome, do get in touch with me as we are keen to establish routes in this biome.

Do send in any sightings at any time of year. It is now possible to post sightings directly on to the website www.natworld.org. 1:50 000 maps are available so it is not necessary to have a GPS. LD van Essen writes a regular newsletter: see their website www.ewt.org.za

Thank you!

Thank you so much for counting regularly, this makes our database very valuable. I am particularly grateful to Precinct Organisers for all their help and for keeping in touch with you. Linda Tsipa has meticulously captured all the data inbetween many other tasks and saved me time editing the tables. As usual Marja Wren-Sargent has been creative in typesetting this newsletter.

I wish you a restful end to the year and safe travelling on the count.

Donella Young,
Project Coordinator

Sustainability, Farmland Bird Index and the role of bird watchers

As philosopher Hershell Elliott warns, “we can disagree on the right way to live and use resources, but we cannot avoid the collective consequences of wrong ways”. Richard Lamm states in the journal *Conservation Biology* (Vol. 2 (22): 269–271) “We have used more resources since 1950 than in the million years preceding 1950. We experience more change in a year than our grandparents did in a lifetime. Yesterday’s solutions have a nasty habit of becoming today’s problems”. We have lived in a culture of growth, but evidence is mounting that we are approaching the world’s carrying capacity. Our earth is warming, forests are shrinking, icecaps are melting, coral reefs are dying, fisheries are collapsing, deserts are encroaching and fresh water is becoming scarce. We live in a society where these facts tend to be ignored, but as Huxley reminds us “Facts do not cease to exist just because they are ignored”. In the last two newsletters I highlighted climate change, as well as the role that we and business can play in the conservation of biodiversity and sustainable development. As mentioned, the time has come for a step-change, a modification of lifestyles, we need to heed the warnings that infinite growth cannot take place in a finite world. As Richard Lamm points out, we are unlikely to be the first species in the world to be exempt from limits!

Species extinctions have been receiving major attention, but changes in biodiversity in the world’s agricultural landscapes have escaped attention to a large degree. In the latest World Birdwatch, an article by Nick Langley draws attention to Europe’s farmlands and whether there is a way to halt biodiversity loss. A Farmland Bird Index has been adopted by the European Union (EU) and studies have shown that farmland bird populations are good surrogates for other trends in farmland biodiversity. In Europe the landscapes in crisis are traditional farmland, grassland and wetlands. Here in South Africa the grassland biome and wetlands are also particularly threatened. BirdLife studies have shown that traditional farming methods in Central and Eastern Europe have helped conserve birds that the 15 senior EU countries are losing. Agri-environmental

schemes have been introduced to retain, or introduce, sustainable agricultural management. But these schemes need to have a good scientific foundation and impacts on biodiversity need to be monitored.

CAR takes place predominantly in agricultural landscapes and you are gathering valuable information that can help us keep track of biodiversity and provide the scientific basis for sustainable management practices. The editorial in the above issue of *Conservation Biology* called *Biodiversity in agricultural landscapes: saving natural capital without losing interest* points out that biodiversity is not a threat to agriculture, but the key to its sustainability. The wider role of biodiversity in agricultural landscapes has not been recognised and not enough attention has been given to the risks associated with the loss of important ecosystem services like healthy soil, clean water, shelter, nutrient cycling etc. It is interesting that the point is made that the recorded decline in agrobiodiversity in many communities is matched by the decline of informal knowledge associated with it.

In the Free State Bird Club newsletter *Mirafra*, there is an interesting article from the Washington Post about the current popularity of bird watching, the enormous contribution that bird watchers are making by participating in large monitoring projects and the consequent rise in consciousness of the environment. The fact that many projects are now web-based has meant that bird watchers, who were previously a ‘bunch of independent agents’ are now connected by the World Wide Web. If you count things, you care for them, if you care, you act and it is as if birdwatchers are becoming like a flock of birds in which the individuals act in harmony – a global consciousness is developing. I agree with David Orr as he ends his article *Framing Sustainability* that in meeting the challenges of the future we need the qualities of clarity, courage, generosity, kindness, wisdom and humour – the qualities Abraham Lincoln used in defining the specific issue of slavery – as we care for our environment that we have treated as a slave for far too long.

---Results---Results---Results---Results---Results---

Number of birds counted in July 2006 census in Eastern Karoo										
Route	km	ADU no.	Observers	BC	KK	LB	NBK	SEC	UK	Other spp
NK021	20	486	Luke Kock		2//	8//				
NK022	20	486	Luke Kock	2//	2//	3//				
NK023	20	486	Luke Kock	101//	7//		1//			
NK031	20	2165	Raymond Swenson	93//	6//			1//		
NK032	20	2165	Raymond Swenson	35//	2//			1//		1KB, 2SG
NK033	20	2165	Raymond Swenson							
NK061	20	494	Fritz Bättenhaussen	136/1/			2//		4//	5SG
NK062	20	494	Fritz Bättenhaussen	96//	2//		5//			16SG
NK063	20	494	Fritz Bättenhaussen	167/2/		7//		2//		
NK071	20	1580	Petrus van der Merwe				2//			1SG
NK072	20	1580	Petrus van der Merwe				17//	1//		
NK073	20	1580	Petrus van der Merwe				1//			
NK081	20	2070	Sandra Hedges				9//			2DB
NK082	20	2070	Sandra Hedges					1//		
NK083	20	2070	Sandra Hedges	11//			1//			
NK101	20	2105	HP Cronje	2//	2//		10//			
NK102	20	2105	HP Cronje	7//			3//			
NK103	20	2105	HP Cronje				4//			
NK141	20	499	Henri Smith	2//					16//	
NK142	20	499	Henri Smith		2//		2//		2//	
NK143	20	499	Henri Smith							
NK151	20	1898	Marisa van der Merwe				20//			4KB
NK152	20	1898	Marisa van der Merwe				4//			
NK153	20	1898	Marisa van der Merwe				4//			
NK171	20	667	Abie de Villiers	2//			4//			
NK172	20	667	Abie de Villiers							
NK173	20	667	Abie de Villiers	20//						
NK181	20	1579	Diana Greathead				2//			2SG
NK182	20	1579	Diana Greathead	41/1/			9//	1//	4//	3DB
NK183	20	1579	Diana Greathead	9/1/		6//				
NK221	20	105	Mark Anderson			14//	11//			
NK222	20	105	Mark Anderson				3//			
NK223	19	105	Mark Anderson							
NK231	20	509	Ronelle Visagie				8//	1//		
NK232	20	509	Ronelle Visagie				9//	1//		1KB, 2SG
NK233	20	509	Ronelle Visagie				2//			
NK351	20	1953	Erik Bättenhaussen							
NK352	20	1953	Erik Bättenhaussen	2//			1//			
NK353	20	1953	Erik Bättenhaussen							7SG
NK391	20	493	Lorette Luscombe		6//					
NK392	20	493	Lorette Luscombe	39//		2//				
NK393	20	493	Lorette Luscombe				3//			
NK431	20	478	Kobus de Villiers (Jnr)	3//		5//	28//			
NK432	20	478	Kobus de Villiers (Jnr)	3//			48//	1//		
NK451	20	1490	Madeleine van Heerden		2//	4//	7//			
NK452	20	1490	Madeleine van Heerden							
NK453	20	1490	Madeleine van Heerden	24/4/		1//				
Total	939			802	35	50	220	10	26	5DB,6KB,35SG
Birds/100 km				85.4	3.7	5.3	23.4	1.1	2.8	

Karoo, Northern Cape

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

During the winter 2006 Karoo Large Terrestrial Bird Survey (KLTBS) 24 people in 16 vehicles counted large terrestrial birds along 939 kms of roads in the Northern Cape’s eastern Karoo. This, the 23rd survey, saw many of the usual stalwarts participate, including Luke Kock, Kobus de Villiers and Lorette Luscombe. It was also nice to have some relatively new participants, such as Sandra Hedges and Heath Cronje, as well as some very new participants, i.e. Raymond Swenson (Raymond now surveys a particularly important route, along which large numbers of Blue Cranes in particular have been recorded in the past). Thanks to everyone, both recent and not so recent participants, for their contributions! A total of 1189 large terrestrial birds were seen (thus 126.6 birds per 100 km), comprising mainly Blue Cranes. If the world’s Blue Crane population estimate of 21,000 individuals is relatively accurate, almost 4% of these birds (i.e. 802) were seen during the KLTBS. This again emphasizes the importance of the KLTBS in monitoring the population of threatened species. Once again, a large number of Northern Black Korhaans were observed (220), as well as reasonable numbers of Blue Korhaans (26), Karoo Korhaans (35), Spur-winged Geese (35) and Ludwig’s Bustards (50). Large numbers of birds were recorded along some of the routes, especially Fritz Bättenhaussen’s route where a total of 445 large terrestrial birds were counted (thus 37.4% of all the birds counted during this KLTBS). Large numbers of Blue Cranes were recorded along several routes, especially those surveyed by Luke Kock (103), Raymond Swenson (128) and Fritz Bättenhaussen (402!!). It must however be remembered that negative results are also good results and some areas just have fewer large terrestrial birds (possibly because of unsuitable habitat), but in order to understand the bigger picture large areas need to be surveyed. Once again, I’d just like to thank the participants for their contributions and especially to Ronelle Visagie and Donella Young for their immense assistance with the coordination of this important project.

Thank you to Mark and Ronelle for coordinating these routes, despite many other demands.

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.

The count conditions were good and the results certainly seem to reflect the rains received in most areas. The highest density of Blue Cranes since monitoring began in 1998 was recorded, with 813 cranes recorded by Des and Martie Schroeder on a relatively new route along the Craddock road. The Grey Crowned Crane density was the second highest and the density of Denham's Bustards was comparable with the density recorded in winter 2000 when there were high numbers in the Humansdorp precinct. Patrick Brett and Denise Hoffmann saw a record number of Karoo Korhaans (36) and their tally of Secretarybirds (8) equalled the record number seen by Debbie Abrahamson on ES07 in summer 2005.

Ken Griffith's noted that there is still no breeding activity in the heronry at Witches' Krantz. A notable change in land use was recorded by Graham Winch on EB03. A single White Stork was seen by Ken and Barbara Monfoort on EB04. Phil Whittington reported that a farmer along EP11 sees White Storks throughout the year on his farm. Two Black Storks were seen on EP04 and one on EH05.

Helen Lechmere-Oertel saw four Wattled Cranes on EE01. No bustard or Blue Korhaan were seen on EE18 although these species are regularly seen in the area. A marked increase in Black Crows has been noted in the

area, with several large flocks of more than 30 birds. However Sandy Stretton saw many Blue Korhaans (45) as usual on EE19.

Yvonne Craig, who coordinates the Humansdorp routes, wrote that "This was indeed a very pleasant count enjoyed by each and every participant. The perfect weather, neither too hot nor too cold, and no wind at all, added to the enjoyment." Liz and Emlyn Horne saw 223 adult Blue Cranes and Yvonne Craig and her team saw a remarkable number of Denham's Bustard on EH06 (57). Two weeks prior to the count Yvonne and the Tudhopes drove part of EH06 and saw 40 Denham's Bustard in one group! Apart from Denham's Bustard the numbers were low in the other coastal precinct, Kenton-on-Sea (EK). Further inland it was windy on the EG routes, but there were bustards on EG03 and there was much else of interest like an Olive Woodpecker, yellow mongoose and a family of warthog on the way home from EG04.

Denzil Ward, who counts EP03, wrote that 'some days are diamonds some are stone', but this one was korhaan! Korhaan numbers were high generally in the Aberdeen and Steytlerville districts (EP).

Don Field and Kate Webster who count EQ02 had a wonderful sighting of a Martial Eagle with snake prey, but for the first time did not hear a single korhaan. I am delighted to see ES03 counted again, however Alison Drewnicki noted two dead White Storks under power lines near Pearston. Unfortunately it was impossible to complete ES05 due to the muddy road.

Number of birds counted in July 2006 census in Eastern Cape												
Route	km	ADU no.	Observers	BC	BHH	CC	DB	LB	SBK	SEC	SG	Other spp
EB01	63.3	175, 174	Kenneth & Gertie Griffith		14//	4/2/	9//					
EB02	75	1398	Keith Marshall		8//	10/1/	5//					
EB03	67.4	115, 680, 2119, 1988	G Winch, I Field, P Swift & G Branford		4//	7/5/	4//		3//	2//		
EB04	62.8	1567, 1568, 1584, 2073	Ken & B Monfoort, W Perks & D Nell		4//		6/2/					1WS
EE01	64	1730	Helen Lechmere-Oertel		1//	4//			1//	22//		4WC
EE02	64	1967	John Filmer		1//	131//				2//		
EE06	53	2087, 895	Corli & Johannes van Rooyen			115//						
EE08	69.6	2098	Mark van Niekerk	74//	16//	23/4/			2//	160//		
EE12	52	901	Jenni Brown		2//	8/1/						7UK
EE17	43.2	1929	Theuns Botha		4//	10/2/				12//		
EE18	43.8	1918, 1919	Les & Adrian Larter	51//	1//	2//			2//	16/4/		
EE19	83.6	1130, 1583	Sandy & Hope Stretton	57//	5//	2/2/				12//		45UK
EG02	51	565	Pat Hulley	7//			1//					
EG03	77	341	Bo Bonnevie					9//	5//			6KB
EG04	65	2144	Jenny Gon							2//		
EH03	58.2	1768, 1769, 1771, 1772	L & E Home, W Rosser & M Keulemans	223/7/	14//		9//				77//	
EH04	44.5	1132, 1767, 1766, 1976	David & Jill Tudhope & P & M Bosman		5//		2//					
EH05	40	1612, 1794, 301	Abel & Hanny Bezuidenhout & C Cook	4//	2//		21//		2/1/	2//		1BS
EH06	58.6	312, 1974, 1977	Yvonne Craig, M Jones & D Ponti	173//	15//		56/1/			11//		7WBK
EK02	58.3	885, 1523	John Lardner-Burke & Allan Wilson		2//		8//					
EK04	59	884, 1525	Peter Metcalf & Tim Cockcroft		3//		4//					2HAR
EK05	62.5	1528, 1526, 131	Laurie Wood, L Knowles & DH Rampf		2//		9//				1//	
EM01	61.9	974, 2111	Bradley & Lee-Ann Gibbons				3//			2//	2//	7NBK
EP01	74	635, 1244	Patrick Brett & Dennis Hoffmann	6//	1//			4//	12//	8//		11KB, 36KK
EP02	62	1570, 1621, 83	Hermann & Terry Hertel & Andy Nixon	139//				7//	5//			1HAR, 1KB
EP03	62	872	Denzil Ward					1//	7//			15KK
EP04	71.5	869, 518	Peter Hall & Jean Spearpoint	6//			2//	10//				2BS, 20KK
EP08	109	270	Dave Brown	2//				6//	1//	4//		1HAR, 1KB, 18KK
EP10	43	1731	John Bowker	107//						2//		4KK, 26NBK
EP11	48.5	1852, 195	Brian Wright & Phil Whittington		13//		9//		4//			
EQ01	44.3	995	Gail McCann		1//						52//	2UK
EQ02	54	930, 157	Don Field & Kate Webster		1//	1//					1//	8UK
ES02	38	2063	Braam Basson									8KB, 1KK
ES03	58	2147	Alison Drewnicki						8//			3KB, 8KK
ES04	47	1972	Zorb Caryer									1UK
ES05	38	915	Andrew Cheeseman				3//	5//	9//			1KB
ES07	35.4	1826	Debbie Abrahamson	2//	1//				6//			
ES08	50	2050	Pat Palmer						7//			1KB, 1KK
ES10	26.3	2044	Desmond & Martie Schroeder	793/10/								
EU01	67.3	1479	Emile Plumstead		5//		2//					1UK
Total	2306			1661	125	334	154	40	68	29	376	3BS, 4HAR, 32KB
Birds/100 km				72.0	5.4	14.5	6.7	1.7	2.9	1.3	16.3	103KK, 33NBK, 64UK,
EB - Border precinct, EE - Northeast Cape precinct, EG - Grahamstown precinct, EH - Humansdorp precinct, EK - Kenton												4WC, 1WS, 7NBK
EM - Middelburg precinct, EP - PE precinct (Aberdeen & Steytlerville districts), EQ - Queenstown precinct, ES - Somerset East precinct, EU - Mthatha												

Western Cape

Swartland precinct

This region received good rains after a number of dry winters. There was a coastal fog, which meant that SW08 had to be counted the following day. Thank you to Bruce and Mel for going out two successive days! Keith Harrison remarked on the use of gas cannons to scare birds, particularly Spur-winged Geese off wheat. Philbert Melck who farms in the area mentioned that his neighbour had bought a gas cannon to scare cranes. Apparently farmers are now experiencing periods when the increased number of cranes does pose a problem. I have alerted the South African Crane Working Group. Philbert and Henrietta saw the highest number of cranes (223) on SW04. Brigid de Kock saw few birds on SW07 where crop spraying was in progress.

No White Storks were seen on the routes, and Jan Hofmeyr recorded 3 White Storks on the pig farm two days after the CAR day.

Overberg precinct

A number of route leaders remarked on the lush conditions, running streams and rivers and full dams. Of concern was John Carter's note that there had been a significant increase in planting of crops where there was previously natural habitat, especially between 30 and 60 kms on his route, OV05. There was a vineyard on OV13 for the first time, a route which runs south from the N2 near Swellendam. Lee Burman remarked on the proliferation of vineyards on her route, OV17, near Hermanus. Over the years there has also been a huge increase in human population density along this route.

The Blue Crane density was the significantly lower than last July, but certainly within the bounds of most winter counts. Stuart and Ruth McLennan and John and Myra Jones saw two Black Stork on their route, OV06, as well as a high total of Denham's Bustards (54). However the all time record for Denham's Bustard was 94 on OV13, a route counted very regularly by Jill Mortimer and her stalwart team from Somerset West Bird

Number of birds counted in July 2006 census in Swartland							
Route	km	ADU no.	Observers	BC	BHH	SG	Other spp
SW01	75	1970	Fiona Hellmann	80//	1//	43//	
SW02	77.8	503, 1077	Sean & Louise Tucker			15//	
SW03	63.7	574, 1080	Sylvia Ledgard & Pat Waddell	38//	2//	46//	
SW04	62	1286, 1287	Philbert & Henrieta Melck	223//		21//	
SW05	59.5	163, 1239	Keith & Rena Harrison	178//		31//	
SW06	74	1359	Reg le Roux	4//	9//	58//	
SW07	49.2	2076, 1122	Brigid de Kock & Linda Reynolds	4//	9//	31//	
SW08	66	1474, 106	Bruce MacKenzie & Mel Tripp	7//	1//	24//	
SW09	60	1135, 1047	Jens & Diane Oelbützel	35//	1//	54//	1HAR
SW10	62.5	223	James Harrison & family	2//			2SEC
SW11	67.4	479, 1081	David & Anne Dixon	16//		8//	2SBK
SW12	79.6	1552, 1553	Tielman & Alta Klynsmith	3//	1//	35//	2SBK
SW13	52.6	991, 2174, 2175	Donella Young, Henwoods & Lena	188//		97//	3SBK
SW14	53	506, 1882	Riaan & Marika van der Walt	24//		25//	2SEC
SW15	57	2006, 1135, 1467	Angela, Jens & Diane Oelbützel	36//	1//	7//	2SEC
SW16	43.8	2051, 1191	Cheryl Seeley & Ian Mileham	26//	1//	36//	
Total	1003			865	26	533	1HAR,7SBK,
Birds/100 km				86.2	2.6	53.1	6SEC

Club. Andrew Marshall saw five White Storks, this being the second time he has seen this species over-wintering. There was crop spraying on OV02 and shooting on routes OV03 and OV17 that probably accounted for low numbers on these routes. Sheila Siebert was unable to complete OV11 due to roadworks and OV28 had been recently bulldozed for the first 20 km, a section on which there were very few birds. I was glad that members of the Robertson Bird Club were able to count OV27.

Please find enclosed details about gathering after the count. I am glad that Bronwyn Botha has taken over as the Overberg Crane Group fieldworker and hope you will be able to meet her at Wicus' farm. Her contact details are (cell) 082 676 1734 and (email) bronwyn@bluecrane.org.za

Beaufort West precinct

Maria Andela noted that at times a strong wind made scanning difficult. Kori Bustard were observed on both these routes.

Number of birds counted in July 2006 census in Overberg										
Route	km	ADU no.	Observers	BC	BHH	DB	KK	SEC	SG	Other spp.
OV01	58	221, 222	Des & Mary Frylinck	36//	1//				24//	3HAR, 2WS
OV02	63.3	1083, 801, 802	Anne Price & K & A McAdam	9//	4//				20//	
OV03	48.2	213, 214	Tom & Freya Brett	48//	2//	8//				
OV04	26.6	213, 214	Tom & Freya Brett	213//	2//	3//			11//	
OV05	69.2	228, 227, 1148	John Carter, B Kakebeeke & B Dennis	175//	5//	22//	16//		31//	2SBK
OV06	53	1655, 2110, 2112, 2113	Stuart & Ruth McLennan, John & Myra Jones	201//	9//	54//	2//		6//	2BS, 5SBK
OV07	68.1	496	Ken Price	312//	1//	19//	4//		30//	
OV08	73	492, 1075	Keith & Michele Moodie	731//	10//	10//			6//	3SBK
OV09	46.4	234, 235	Craig & Wendy Thom	280//	1//				30//	
OV10	56	56	Pieter Albertyn	81//	6//		5//		22//	
OV11	38.6	244, 245, 246	Pieter & Shiela Siebert & M Loubser	25//	5//	6//			14//	1HAR
OV12	57.2	216, 1381, 1380	Dawn Woods, R Gilmore & G Fleming	269//	6//	18//		2//	50//	1HAR, 1SBK
OV13	70	520, 229, 672, 671	Jill Mortimer, I Cooke, R Lind & A White	554//	37//	8//	94//	19//	55//	3HAR, 2SBK
OV14	90	123, 1922	John & O Coats & Maureen & H Aucamp	244//	4//	7//	7//	2//	25//	
OV15	74.8	255, 256	Dave & Sue Whitelaw	17//	6//		4//		5//	1WS
OV16	61.8	249, 1379, 2167, 2160	P van den Berg, W du Toit, D Karssen & M Werdmuller	254//	19//	8//	2//		18//	
OV17	62	878	Lee Burman	91//	2//	6//			54//	
OV18	50.2	240	Wicus Leeuwner	26//		9//			11//	
OV19	62.6	219, 1213, 1632	Ronnie Crowther, Estelle Stodel & Christine Wallace	73//	8//		1//		72//	
OV20	57	1441, 1325	Alison & Neville Passmore	130//	9//	3//	1//		31//	1HAR
OV21	68.3	2136	AW Terblanche	53//	3//	5//			3//	
OV23	56.5	1062	Andrew Marshall	1//	8//				13//	5WS
OV24	57.5	636, 1211, 1212	Mick & June D'Alton & G Swanepoel	1//	12//	10//			21//	
OV25	36	1777, 1778, 2169, 2170	Rae & Ann Gordon, K & O Winterton	2//	4//				11//	
OV26	19.4	871	Jeffrey Arizon & 2 Teslaarsdal learners	7//	2//				41//	
OV27	65	2139, 2140, 2138	Gilly Schütte, Mike Ford & Lauren Bloch	4//	2//			1//	56//	
OV28	41	1462, 1825	Tonia & Flip Schonken	5//	1//			1//	6//	
OV29	26	213, 214	Tom & Freya Brett	13//					5//	
OV33	61.4	1463	Frans de Graaff	4//	5//	7//		1//	25//	1SBK
OV35	23	1469	Avril Young	42//		6//			20//	
Total	1640			4043	145	299	63	8	737	2BS,9HAR,
Birds/100km				246.5	8.8	18.2	3.8	0.5	44.9	14SBK,8WS
OV34	61	1550, 1551	Heyné & Sharon Brink	4//				1//	20//	



Dennis Henwood, Lena Gieschen and Belinda Henwood counting in the Overberg. Photo by Donella Young.

Little Karoo precinct

A new route, WK03, which was reced a few years ago by Keith Moodie and Gilly Schütte, of Robertson Bird Club, had 38 Blue Cranes. I had noticed reports on the capebirdnet of cranes in this area and my parents, who live in the neighbouring valley, were available to do a count.

Number of birds counted in July 2006 census in Western Cape								
Route	km	ADU no.	Observers	BC	BHH	KK	SG	Other spp
WB01	65	343, 2067	Maria Andela & M van der Merwe			21//		1KB
WB03	58	1909, 1971	Stefan & Hannatjie Theron	46//		3//		5KB, 4LB
WC01	43	1291	George Hattingh				1//	5DB, 4SBK
WC02	56	2027	Jan Oransie				8//	
WU01	51	1392	J de Jaar	7//				
WU02	57	539, 2062	Jonas Witbooi & P Nurse	16//	1//			11DB, 2LB
WU03	51	540	JP Esau		1//			
WU04	35	1606, 434	Natalie Baker, Henk Alting & team		2//			
WU05	70	297, 1520, 1521	Mike & G Euston-Brown & B du Plessis	94//	2//			4DB, 11LB
WU06	13	1606	Natalie Baker, Henk Alting & team		1//			
WU07	68	2173, 1332	Jan Makampies & Kerry Hampson	11//	1//	12//	9//	2LB, 10SBK
WW01	57	2054, 2127, 393	Margaret Kiely, M Beech & A Brash		14//		48//	2WS
Total	624			175	21	36	66	20DB,6KB,19LB,
Birds/100 km				28.0	3.4	5.8	10.6	14SBK,2WS

WB - Beaufort West precinct, WC - Calitzdorp precinct, WU - Uniondale precinct, WW - Wilderness precinct

Uniondale precinct

I was delighted that Natalie Baker who coordinates these routes was able to hold a training session for CapeNature route leaders, which proved helpful. Mike & Gill Euston-Brown and Barry du Plessis recorded 11 Ludwig's Bustard, after recording their first of this species in January.

There were two over-wintering White Stork on Margaret Kiely's route, WW01, on the Old Cape Road.

Calitzdorp precinct

Bird numbers were particularly low this last winter, probably due to the low rainfall. George Hattingh reported this was the first time that he had neither seen nor heard korhaans.

Duncan and Inés Cooke saw these cranes and sheep in the Overberg recently; two of the cranes were ringed. Photo by Duncan Cooke.



KwaZulu-Natal

The Grey Crowned Crane density was at an all time high, with the vast majority in the East Griqualand precinct. KG07, counted by Frits and Dee Nel, had the highest number of all three crane species; this route has extensive wetland areas. Ed and Myra Wells noted that Franklin Vlei on their route, KG11, had been burnt and the usual cranes were absent, only one pair flew in as if to land but turned south.

In the Midlands precinct Shirley Bennett, the Precinct Organiser, remarked on the large amount of maize stubble throughout, much of it ploughed, especially around Greytown. Most of the first half of KM03 was recently burnt, as well as the last 20 km. There were 34 Black-headed Herons in the first half in two groups. In the Underberg precinct Chris Thomas mentioned that visibility was much improved due to burnt fire-

breaks. Seven White Storks were seen by Monte and Eunice Pera on KM08. White Storks were also recorded on one route in each of the Ladysmith, Newcastle, Dundee and Underberg precincts. Ken Gordon felt that their count was so poor due to the coldest winter in at least twenty years and many birds had not stayed as in the past.

A highlight for Malcolm Gemmell was hearing a Denham's Bustard calling three times on his route KC01, a moderate but very audible 'bark'. Oribe were recorded on 10 KZN routes, with 15 on KC01.

Do continue to count Oribe and use the following abbreviations for gamebirds: **HG** for Helmeted Guineafowl, **CF** for Crested Francolin, **SS** for Swainson's Spurrow, **NS** for Natal Spurrow, **RNS** for Red-necked Spurrow, **RWF** for Red-winged Francolin, **GWF** for Grey-winged Francolin and **SHF** for Shelley's Francolin.

Thank you to Tim Wood for maintaining interest in CAR in KZN.

Number of birds counted in July 2006 census in KwaZulu-Natal												
Route	km	ADU no.	Observers	BC	BHH	BI	CC	DB	HG	SEC	SG	Other spp
KC01	51	433	Malcolm Gemmell		35//	4//	8//	13//	136//	4//	86//	1BBK, 15OR, 2RNS
KD01	81	2084, 2085	Henry & Liz Bugden		2//				85//			
KD02	63	736, 1179	Tony & Val Cross	2//	3//	3//		1//		1//		
KD03	74	807, 1830	Peter Dearlove & Tinkie Muller									
KD04	52	2172	Jeff Hilliar		1//	34//				1//	3//	7WS
KD05	52	677	Paul Garner						73//			
KD06	49.5	1709, 1755	Myles & Carol Ellerker		1//		2//			2//	12//	2WBK
KD07	70	909	Heino Wellmann									
KD08	58	1834	P Struweg		1//					1//		
KD11	52	1716	Margie Post									
KG02	52.6	1073	Pat Lowry				23//	10//		1//	8//	
KG03	53.5	626, 1799	Malcolm & Sarah Rivett	6//	4//		162//			2//	15//	
KG04	73.8	627	Bob Williams				2//	1//	81//	3//		
KG05	55.4	629	'Stooks' Wilton		9//		78//		21//	1//	46//	
KG06	59.4	1536, 1537	John & Val Baxter		2//		4//	3//		4//	2//	1OR, 1WC
KG07	39.5	630	Kobus Nel	112//	14//	4//	433//	15//		1//	195//	13WC
KG08	60	2086	Allan Geldart						30/10//			
KG09	10.9	427, 428	Bruce & Pat Whittle		1//		109//	4//		1//	16//	7WC
KG10	36.3	1240, 1241	Ed & Myra Wells		1//		154//			3//	2//	1WC
KG11	53.7	632, 633	Jimmy & Lorraine Scott		3//		6/2//		60//	2//		5OR, 7WC
KL01	89.8	50, 142	Ken Gordon & Neil Smith	29//			18//		75//	1//		4SS, 2WBK, 2WC, 2WS
KL02	87	610	Rod Dicks		6//	6//			102//			7WBK
KL11	34	814	Ann Gray		11//	3//	2//		8/6//			
KM01	80.7	474, 1581	Shirley Bennett & Evelyn Hughes		19//				73//	2//	18//	
KM02	68.5	498	Margie Sleigh		5//		4//		73//		3//	1WC
KM03	96.3	1904, 1905	Drummond & Gloria Densham	2//	41//		3//		8//		84//	2OR
KM04	35	1719, 1720	Erwin & Helen Burmester	4//							66//	5WC
KM05	83.2	1887, 1888	Alan & Bernardine Turner	2//	11//						224//	2WC
KM06	92	474, 1581	Shirley Bennett & Evelyn Hughes	2//	13//	15//	5//		39//		36//	3OR
KM07	68.7	490, 1843	Kevin & Lindy McCann		7//	3//		2//				4//
KM08	58	187, 1828	Monte & Eunice Pera	2//	15//	2//	5//	1//	3//		250//	7WS
KN01	62.5	927, 1756, 924	J & C de Villiers & H Berhrens		1//	1//						2SS
KN03	55.1	1609, 1754	Andre & Hettie Bouwer		2//	8//	4//		75//			
KN04	48	925	Alan Schwikkard		13//	27//			36/11//		16/7//	1OR
KN05	41.2	1071, 1742	John & Kathy Sharpe		7//	7//			105//		1//	4SS, 2WBK, 11WS
KN06	52	2036, 2037, 1929, 1930	Klaus & Miemie Heyer & Botha's		3//	5//	4//		67//	6//	51//	2OR, 5SS
KO01	55.2	425, 1529, 431, 1963	G & S Calverley, D Leitch & S Calitz		1//				20/10//	1//		
KP01	62.7	1792	Frik Lemmer		10//	11//	2//		12//	2//	41//	
KU01	68	429, 2015	Chris Thomas & Gayle Ellison	5//	8//	9//	24//	1//	9//	2//	11//	1OR, 2WC, 5WS
KU02	68	1741	Carol Home		4//			6/1//	1//		26//	3OR
KV01	81.8	1683	AP Keeve		13//	14//	19//	8//			12//	1BBK, 3WBK
KV02	60.4	2016, 201	Paul & Ria Steffensen	2//	1//		2//		19//	3//	3//	1OR, 6WBK
KV03	63	1566	Darryl Baxter		5//	31//			70//			1SF
KV04	34.6	1722, 1790, 1791	C Oberholster, A Steyn & D MacLennan							1//		
Total	2643			168	273	187	1083	60	1317	45	1238	22WBK, 41WC, 32WS
Birds/100 km				6.4	10.3	7.1	41.0	2.3	49.8	1.7	46.8	22WBK, 41WC, 32WS

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

Free State

Brian D. Colahan, Principal Nature Conservation Scientist: Ornithology, Free State Tourism, Environment & Economic Affairs, reports:

The weather was generally quite good in the three Free State precincts for the 2006 winter CAR and at least 102 routes (I am still waiting for some results) were surveyed, covering a total of 6895 km, 1201 in the North-western Precinct (FW, 18 routes), 1610 km in the North-eastern (FN, 25 routes), and 4084 km in the Southern (FS, 58 routes). A grand total of 5869 birds was recorded, or 85 birds/100 km, up on the 75/100 km of the previous winter. However, this was largely because of the 2589 Spur-winged Geese recorded, with this species dominating all three precincts; over half of them were seen along just two routes, 823 on FW36 (Johan Hardy and family), and 506 on FS114 (Francois and Mariet Nieuwoudt). Far more Grey Crowned Cranes were

Number of birds counted in July census 2006 in north-western Free State											
Route	km	ADU no.	Observers	BC	BHH	NBK	SEC	SG	Other spp		
FW08	73	1514	Pieter Terreblanche		2//	9//					
FW13	53.2	1515, 1903, 1162	Johann & RM Potgieter & P van der Merwe		17//	1//					
FW16	68	1172, 1749	Pieter & Cathy Lubbe								
FW18	49.1	1268	Herman Jordaan			47//		3//			
FW26	76.4	1174	Fanie Gouws	3//		2//		1//			
FW34	77.5	1163	Des Walker		2//	55//	1//	11//			
FW36	83.1	28, 1809	Johan & Amelia Hardy			13//	21//	823//	2WS		
FW45	50.3	1563, 1824	Gert & Elize Jordaan				6//				
FW46	55.1	1624, 1990	Vella & Hilda van Niekerk Brink	5//	1//	10//		2//	8UK		
FW47	54.7	1890, 1891	Greg & Janine Goosen		1//	10//					
FW50	82	1938, 1939	Helmut & Elizabeth Lekaota		10//	3//		3//	1WS		
FW51	80	1253	JJ den Houting	7/14//		34//			14UK		
FW52	53.4	1957	Rosemary Girard		17//	11//		16//			
FW53	89	1173, 1940	Chris & Martina de Lange		7//	29//					
FW55	62.2	1936, 1937	Andries & Leanda Nel		8//	17//		57//			
FW56	62.1	1901, 1902	Stephen & Marietjie Hill		6//	3//		6//			
FW57	74	1958	Joey Knoesen		3//	19//	1//		2AS		
FW58	58.3	1890	Greg & Janine Goosen		1//	13//			8UK		
Total	1201			29	88	290	2	922	2AS, 30UK		
Birds/100 km				2.4	7.3	24.1	0.2	76.7	3WS		

Number of birds counted in July 2006 census in north-eastern Free State												
Route	km	ADU no.	Observers	BC	BHH	BI	CC	SEC	SG	UK	Other spp	
FN16	59	701	Theunis Bekker			23//			205//	5/2//		
FN24	65	719, 720	Georg & Eria Wandrag									
FN28	54	1892, 1893	Otto & Marguerite Nel				2//			14//		
FN29	73	721, 1219	Freda & John Whipp	2//	1//	3//						
FN31	77.6	2109	R Dillon	135//	19//	4//	50//	5//	30//	11//		
FN32	53.7	1072	David Weaver		7//			1//				
FN35	55	946	TI Wessels									
FN37	59.5	2042, 2043	Melanie & Martin Potgieter		4//			2//	5//		2LB, 3NBK	
FN39	64.3	1433, 1470	Peter Millin & Geoff Potter		6//	1//			3//			
FN40	66.6	2055, 2056	Hansie & Amie Joubert		3//				1//			
FN41	80.7	1045	GJ Vermeulen		8//	1//		2//	8//	5//	10NBK	
FN42	71	1517	Henk Venter		5//				2//	15//		
FN44	71.7	714	Frik Oosthuysen		5//	11//			14/5//		1NBK	
FN45	72.2	188, 945	Hazel Vickery & M van Gelder	5//	1//	1//				12//		
FN46	64	718	Gerhard van Deventer		4//	2//				12//		
FN48	56.1	605, 1820	Janet & Koos Lourens								3NBK	
FN49	48.2	944	Gert Maritz	2//	3//	2//	56//		17/4//	7//		
FN50	56	942	Pieter Koorhof		9//	1//		1//	1//			
FN51	63.5	1157	Frans du Plooy		6//	3//			6//			
FN52	60	717, 1844	Johan & JML Strauss		32//	1//			1//	7//		
FN55	69.9	703	Nacelle Collins		4//							
FN57	62.5	1932	Pietre Enslin		1//	6//		2//			1HAR	
FN58	69	705	Paulus Fihlo		39//	7//		1//	7//	4//		
FN60	66	1505	Brian Barnes						4//		38NBK	
FN61	71.2	2153	Jannie Schabot		1//			2//		7//	9NBK	
Total	1610				144	158	66	108	16	313	101	2LB, 1HAR, 64NBK
Birds/100 km				8.9	9.8	4.1	6.7	1.0	19.4	6.3		

spotted this winter (110, compared with 13 in 2005), but with most of these also along just two routes: 56 on FN49 (Gert and Johan Maritz) and 50 on FN31 (Rick Dillon and his team of conservancy members). Also substantially up were Blue Korhaan numbers (582 vs 483) and the observers for 24 routes had the pleasure of seeing 10 or more of these delightful birds (Danie Krynauw saw 51 along FS114!). The more secretive White-bellied Korhaan is occasionally spotted in the FN and FS precincts and the only ones recorded this winter were six along Johan Cloete's FS85. White Storks regularly over-winter and were seen along two FN routes and one in the FS, but Abdim's Storks does so only occasionally and the two spotted by Joey Knoessen and Chris Koch in a patch of burnt grassland along FW57 are the first recorded during a winter CAR in the Free State.

Many thanks to Brian Colahan, particularly for coordinating so many routes over a vast area.

Number of birds counted in July census 2006 in southern Free State												
Route	km	ADU no.	Observers	BC	BHH	LB	NBK	SEC	SG	UK	Other spp	
FS06	73.8	700	Johan Watson	17//	1//	12/4//	12//	6//	12//			
FS07	62.3	1746	Angelo Nichas	100//		6//	7//		1//	3//		
FS08	68	6, 1429	André & Annatjie Schlemmer	2//	1//		7//		13//	9//	2HAR, 1WS	
FS09	62.5	24	Brian Colahan	7//		3//	18//		59//	6//		
FS12	55	662, 1180	Herman & Janet Kleynhans	123//		3//	18//	4//	6//	36//		
FS15	74	1056	PL Crouse				4//	1//				
FS16	55.9	1399	T Mostert				6//					
FS17	74.3	1620	Dawie Kok	8//		1//	35//	1//	3//	13//		
FS18	74	684	Louise Coetzee		1//		21//	6//	1//	4//		
FS19	84.6	1155	Ronél du Preez		2//		61//	2//	5//	2//		
FS20	64.7	1432, 2171	Anne McLeod		1//		38//	1//	2//			
FS21	59.8	682	Leon Barkhuizen		5//		18//		3//			
FS23	74	683	Chris Botha	165//			2//	2//	1//			
FS27	78.4	694	Erika Schulze	31/9//		1//	7//	2//	34//	12//		
FS29	61	822	Stephanie Gerber				2//					
FS31	73.1	259	Johan van Niekerk		1//		7//	1//	6//	6//		
FS35	79	1258	Hannes Blom		1//		22//		248//	24//		
FS39	72	689	Ann Hiemstra		3//		2//	1//				
FS40	72.4	2107	Cornelia Squirra				25//	8//	27//			
FS43	78	1801	Christo de Meyer		1//		20//					
FS47	84	1055	Johan van den Berg		3//		18//	2//	14//			
FS50	79.3	1058	Frans Marais		1//				9//	10//		
FS51	80.3	24, 1262	Brian Colahan & JP Liefing	33//	1//		3//		1//	10//		
FS52	77.1	24, 1996	Brian & Corlia Colahan		1//		3//		9//	29//		
FS54	57.6	1262, 1818	Janine Liefing & E. Beemster-Boer		1//		31//		41//	2//		
FS56	72	988, 2122	Stephanus & Fanie Buys		2//		70//	4//		12//	2CC	
FS58	80	863	Pierre Nel				33//	2//				
FS60	71	1152, 1289	Buks & Annatjie Roets				27//		34//	2//		
FS65	81.9	864	Sawas Vrahimis				21//					
FS67	67.9	950	Daan Müller				9//		14//		02-Nov	
FS69	75	1065, 1421	Deon du Plessis & Michael la Grange		1//	1//	6//	2//	9//2	12//		
FS70	59.2	1150, 1151	Abrie & Heléne Bam		1//			2//	13//	3//		
FS79	55.5	1397	Dewald Liebenberg				21//	1//				
FS85	74.8	285	JB Cloete		2//		10//	1//	4//	5//	6WBK	
FS87	62.8	24	Brian Colahan		2//		1//		1//	24//		
FS88	63	1949	Wimpie Geyer		2//		23//		14//	17//		
FS91	58.9	641	Rick Nuttall		2//	1//	45//	4//		4//		
FS93	49.4	700	Johan Watson	2//	1//	4//	4//		9//	4//		
FS95	85	821	Coenie Erasmus					3//				
FS101	60.6	1046	Blackie de Swardt	39//	1//					2//		
FS102	71.5	687	Riëtte Griesel	36//		8//	7//	2//	36//	4//		
FS103	56	1052	Duart Hugo		4//		9//		102//			
FS104	72.5	1395	Geoff Johnson				40//		1//	40//		
FS105	80.3	24, 1262	Brian Colahan & JP Liefing	12//			4//	1//	3//	10//		
FS106	46	1946	Hennie Bester				28//		6//			
FS107	72	1836, 1837	John & Dawnia Edgar		3//			1//	6//			
FS109	65	24, 1996	Brian & Corlia Colahan				1//		4//	33//		
FS110	56	1396	Jeremy Jones				31/3//			13//		
FS111	80.2	1146	PJ Botha				1//			2//		
FS112	60	1747	Morné Pretorius				19//		36/12//	18//		
FS113	94.2	1616	Danie Krynauw		1//		6//	4//	37//	49/2//		
FS114	80	713	Francois Nieuwoudt		1//		4//		506//			
FS116	47	1799	Peter Divall				13//				6KK	
FS117	66.5	691	Willie Mostert				15//	1//		1//		
FS118	68.9	1996, 24	Corlia & Brian Colahan	53//	1//		6//	2//	7//	9//		
FS119	74	1140, 1141	John & Jill Moffett		6//		15//	2//				
FS120	76	1889	JC Labuschagne		2//		21//			6//		
FS121	58.6	1048	Samuel Pauw		1//		3//		1/1//			
FS122	67.2	1057	Lourens & Istelle Goosen		3//		5//	3//	1//	2//		
Total	4084				637	60	44	898	72	1340	453	2CC, 2HAR
Birds/100 km				15.6	1.5	1.1	22.0	1.8	32.8	11.1	6WBK, 1WS	

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

Count conditions in the Steenkampsberg precinct were ideal and the grass was generally short and mown fields common. However David Gaynor noted that bird numbers were generally below average, apart from Southern Bald Ibis, Black-headed Heron and Helmeted Guineafowl. It was the first time in 18 counts that the Gaynors didn't do MS01 and they could see the value of consistently doing the same route.

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 Southern Bald Ibis, as well as for cranes and bustards.

Middelburg precinct

I was glad to receive a count from Brian and Margaret Taylor who had a wet route.

Number of birds counted in July 2006 census in Mpumalanga											
Route	km	ADU no.	Observers	BC	BHH	BI	CC	SG	UK	Other spp	
MC01	76	1388, 1926	Janice Isom & Alison Hanson		3//	11//			18//	8//	3DB
MC02	64	1369	Lester Niss		7//	4//					3OR
MC03	58	2095	Claire Eksteen		2//			55//			
MC04	68.9	1511, 1750	Barbi & Allan Forsyth		6//	3//	5//	4//			38HG, 7WS
MC05	69	2057	Bill Naude		1//	6//		30//			87HG
MC06	69.6	1618, 1751	Craig & Karin Nelson	2//	4//	68//	2//	1//	9//		18HG
MC07	76	1391, 1744	Philip & Lynn Silcock		21//						
MM01	54	1968, 1969	Brian & Margaret Taylor		1//			56/10			
MT01	84.5	1816, 1817	Colin & RONALDA Williams	50//	7//	4//		3//	9//		133HG, 29SS
MT02	63.2	1912, 1973	Kevin & Glynis Armitage		48//	49//		4//	5//		394HG, 1SEC, 27SS
MT03	34.5	1986, 2093	Dries & Bonita Schoeman		10//						15HG, 1NBK, 13SS, 6WS
MT04	36.9	1986, 2093	Dries & Bonita Schoeman		7//						97HG
MS01	52	2096, 2097	Trevor & Sharon Schaefer		1//		4//	2//			1BBK
MS02	56.5	1725, 1726, 1911	Des & Ann Brulais & Neil Champion		1//	2//					20HG, 1SEC
MS04	62.6	1927, 1928	John & Anita Meiring		1//						60HG
MS05	57.3	726, 725	David & Helen Gaynor		6//			6//			31HG
MS06	57	1178, 1841	Hendriek & Letitia van Wyk		1//			2//			
MS07	55.4	1109, 1246	Bryan & Alice Rowland		1//						35HG
MS09	55.4	2009	Gavin Shaw		3//	16//		3//			
MS13	58.2	724	Lientjie Cohen		1//						23HG
MW01	57	2017	Norman Dennett		1//	8//		3//			
MW03	64.4	2163	Keith Davidson	2//	11//	3//	9/3//	7//	8//		1BBK, 2DB, 4SEC
MW06	58.4	2160	Helen Whiteley		8//		120//	8//	5//		29HG
MW07	65.5	361, 2018	Judy-Lynn Wheeler & Bev Thome	2//	4//	3//			9//		115HG
MW08	77	1539	Nigel Anderson		1//	26//		2//			2SEC
MW09	87	2003	Ann Cleal & Norman Dennett		10//	15/2//	9//	333//	1//		4SEC, 2WS
MW10	48.8	2162	DA Milstein	21//	1//		9//		2//		
Total	1667				77	173	216	162	547	61	2BBK, 5DB, 1095HG, 1NBK,
Birds/100 km				4.6	10.4	13.0	9.7	32.8	3.7		3OR, 69SS, 12SEC, 15WS
MC - Chrissiesmeer precinct, MM - Middelburg precinct, MS - Steenkampsberg precinct, MT - Standerton precinct,											
MW - Wakkerstroom precinct											

Standerton precinct

Kevin and Glynis Armitage saw 394 Helmeted Guineafowl on MT02, as well as six other species. Six White Stork were seen on Dries and Bonita Schoeman's route, MT03.

Wakkerstroom precinct

After a 'flooded out' summer count, Judy-Lynn Wheeler wrote that the "CAR count in Wakkerstroom is a challenge to say the least. We were all set with teams in place when one vehicle seriously broke down and two other team leaders became very ill. We could not find another vehicle or team anywhere."

So I am grateful that six of the seven routes were counted on 29th July. The 7th route, which was furthest away from any other, was counted (not ideally) on 2nd August, especially as the temperature didn't exceed 2.8 °C with gale force winds!

MW02 and MW04 have been changed to include more representative habitat and re-numbered MW08 and MW09 respectively. Helen Whiteley saw a record number of Grey Crowned Cranes (120) on MW06!

Chrissiesmeer precinct

Barbi Forsyth described a beautiful day, but numbers were low so apparently "it was a pity the large terrestrial birds didn't get the email". Southern Bald Ibis were recorded on five of the seven routes, with the highest number (68) on Craig Nelson's route, MC06. Part of this route (12-30 km) is through intensive farming areas with no sightings of CAR birds. Barbi and Alan saw seven White Storks on their route, MC04, as well as five Grey Crowned Cranes. Bill Naude noted that they heard gun shot at 20 km and saw no more large terrestrial birds on the remaining 50 km of MC05.

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

Kruger precinct

I am delighted that three recce counts were completed in the Kruger National Park by 15 members of the Lowveld Bird Club. Woolly-necked, Saddle-billed and Yellow-billed Storks were recorded as well as gamebirds and a single Ground Hornbill. These routes just need some minor adjustments. Thank you to Brian Guerin and John Broodryk for initiating this precinct.

Number of birds counted in July 2006 census in Gauteng										
Route	km	ADU no.	Observers	BC	BHH	SG	HG	Other spp		
GB01	20.5	931	Francois Wolfaardt	1//	17//	3//	9//	3NBK		
GB02	30.7	931	Francois Wolfaardt					1NBK		
GB03	52	2135	Peter Huggins		2//		296//			
GB04	45	613	Craig Whittington-Jones		1//		170//	2SEC		
GB05	18	2104	Pieta Compaan				2//			
GB06	46	613	Craig Whittington-Jones		28//		429//	1WS		
GB07	55	2099	Piet Muller		4//					
GC01	16	2046	Willem de Lange				64//	10NBK		
GC02	61.5	613	Craig Whittington-Jones		3//	40//	290//			
GC03	78	2046, 1538	Willem de Lange				37//	3NBK		
GC04	72	613, 1652	Craig Whittington-Jones		15//	82//	135//	5NBK, 3SEC, 15WS		
GC05	62.9	1651	John & Moira Randell		3//	5//	180//			
GD01	66	77	Ian Smith	46//	45//	8//	75//	2SEC		
GD02	52	2166	Neville Cornish		2/1//	10//	33//			
GD03	36	2145	Diane Rose		20//		65//	8NBK, 1SEC		
GD04	52.9	2146	Frans Rossouw	120//	3//	12//				
GH01	54.4	2045	Rouxdene Deysel		5//	6//	119//	1NBK, 3WS		
GH02	73	1987	Coral Birss		22//	3//	55//	1NBK, 6WS		
GH03	56	2101	Hein Pienaar		9//	2//	28//	4NBK		
GH04	64	1561	Sizakele Ndzhukula		3//					
GH05	56.8	2039, 2038	Johnny & Andra Hennop		3//			7NBK		
GM01	50	2102	Leon Labuschagne							
GM02	20	2102	Leon Labuschagne							
GW01	52	2048	Gareth Eloff				195//	2WBK		
GW02	48.5	2152	Mags Pillay		1//					
Total	1239			167	188	171	2182	43NBK, 8SEC, 25WS		
Birds/100 km				13.5	15.2	13.8	176.1	2WBK		
GB - Bronkhorstspuit, GC - Carletonville, GD - Devon, GH - Heidelberg, GM - Moloto,										
GW - World Heritage Site										

Gauteng

Craig Whittington-Jones, Gauteng Department of Agriculture, Conservation and Environment, reported in his newsletter **Memorable Order of the Under-appreciated Laughing Dove (MOULD)**:

"Since the first route was mapped and counted in the Devon area of Gauteng in summer 2001, the network has expanded to 25 routes in six precincts, covering 1235 km and involving 45 volunteers. Given the extent of habitat fragmentation and transformation in Gauteng, there is little room for additional CAR routes, but there is still a need for additional volunteers.

"The Devon precinct produced the highest density of Blue Cranes, Secretarybirds and Black-headed Herons in the province while White Storks, Northern Black Korhaans and Spur-winged Geese were most commonly recorded in the Carletonville precinct. White-bellied Korhaan were only recorded in the Cradle of Humankind World Heritage Site, which also had the highest density of Helmeted Guineafowl though good numbers of this species were recorded along several routes. Unfortunately not all counters were informed of the need to count Helmeted Guineafowl, hence the lack of data for this species along certain routes.

"While it is undoubtedly more enjoyable to count a route that produces good numbers of the target species, both presence and absence data is essential to build up an accurate picture of what is happening in terms of the distribution and abundance of target species in Gauteng and at a national level. Consequently, all routes are equally important in terms of the overall project objectives and continuity of counting is essential."

So do remember to count the **Helmeted Guineafowl (HG)**. Thank you to Craig for all the time in establishing this precinct.