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BirdLife
South Africa
Giving Conservation Wings
The Animal Demography Unit conducts the
Coordinated Avifaunal Roadcounts in partnership with
BirdLife South Africa



COORDINATED AVIFAUNAL ROADCOUNTS (CAR)

Newsletter 26

June 2009

General

I have just returned from my first holiday in the Kgalagadi Transfrontier Park where we had amazing sightings of Kori Bustards, the largest birds counted by CAR. These spectacular birds weigh about 20 kg and are one of the heaviest amongst flying birds. It was most refreshing to absorb the wonderful beauty of wide open spaces, just watching nature. I came away so thankful to be living in Africa where we are blessed with such incredible biodiversity and untransformed wilderness.

Dr Mike Rands wrote in *WorldBirdwatch* recently "At a time of global economic turmoil, it is not surprising that governments, business and society as a whole tend to disregard the value of birds and wider biodiversity. They do not realise that species and habitats generate the ecosystem services – like clean air and water, food and medicines – needed to sustain humanity." I am most thankful for people like yourselves, who have such a commitment to conservation and appreciate nature's vital role in sustaining our lives.

Fourteen precincts reached milestone counts last year. The Overberg precinct reached fifteen years of monitoring. The Steenkampsberg and Middelburg precincts in Mpumalanga, the Escourt and Newcastle precincts in KwaZulu-Natal, and the Eastern Cape precincts reached ten years of monitoring. This summer the North-western Free State, the Beaufort West and Little Karoo precincts completed ten years of monitoring. This winter the Swartland will complete fifteen years of monitoring, the North-eastern and Southern Free State and the rest of the Kwa-Zulu Natal precincts have already completed ten years. The Gauteng precinct completed six years of monitoring in January 2009. It is most encouraging to see this commitment in Gauteng, an area where the diversity of large terrestrial birds is very low and there are so few birds on routes. Land transformation has been extensive in Gauteng and the urban sprawl continues to spread.

Next year the Eastern Karoo routes will have been counted for fifteen years too! While travelling to the Kgalagadi I was very struck by the large farms in the Northern Cape where land transformation has been minimal compared to the rest of South Africa. This is the only precinct in this vast province and therefore I would like to encourage the faithful KLTBS (Karoo Large Terrestrial Bird Survey) participants to continue counting. The Eastern Karoo routes are monitoring very important threatened species like the Kori and Ludwig's Bustard and Blue Crane. One of the greatest threats to large terrestrial birds is power-lines, which abound in the Karoo. Jessica Shaw who recently completed her Masters in Conservation Biology used the CAR data extensively in her study on Blue Cranes in the Overberg and her results highlight the threat that power-lines are to this species. Jessica is planning to do a PhD studying the Ludwig's Bustard that Mark Anderson's earlier power-line

work has indicated is another species threatened by this hazard. There are very few long-term monitoring projects and increasingly the CAR results are used for Environmental Impact Assessments e.g. for routing power-lines, siting wind farms or for studies on phenomena like climate change.

In the journal, *Conservation Biology* Vol. 23, a paper entitled "Advantages of Volunteer-Based Biodiversity Monitoring in Europe" reported on the results of the first large scale evaluation of monitoring practices in Europe. Monitoring practices and potential benefits resulting from volunteer involvement in different species groups and across several eastern and western European countries were compared. The results showed that volunteer involvement is extremely important and valuable for biodiversity monitoring because data from participatory monitoring networks are not less informative, and may be more informative, than those collected in professional schemes. So do be greatly encouraged, you are making an incredibly valuable contribution to monitoring biodiversity. This is why the South African National Biodiversity Institute (SANBI), is supporting the CAR project as you assist in helping the government meet its responsibilities in complying with the Convention on Biodiversity.

As I mentioned in the website report there were some very slippery, muddy routes in Gauteng, Mpumalanga and the northern parts of the Free State – thank you so much to all of you who persevered in counting, and especially those who returned to count once the roads had become passable! There was also rain in Kwa-Zulu Natal just prior to the count, but fortunately the roads were passable on 31st January.

White Storks abounded this last summer count with sightings on most routes in KwaZulu-Natal, Eastern Cape, Overberg, Mpumalanga and both

northern Free State precincts. There were a surprising number of Black Storks recorded in more precincts than ever before i.e. Overberg, Southern and North-eastern Free State, north-eastern Eastern Cape and East Griqualand precincts. Marabou Storks have also been mentioned in the birdnets as occurring in unusual places.

Sally Hofmeyr and I counted OV29 and were very struck by the number of river beds that had been graded. I have noticed this in the Villiersdorp area as well. It is important that river courses are protected, especially the natural wetland vegetation that slows down fast flowing waters preventing flood damage. Rivers should also not be straightened: this causes the water to flow even faster. Grading is very destructive to the whole fragile wetland ecosystem. If you are farming you will find the Mondi Wetlands website www.wetland.org.za useful for practical help on conserving and rehabilitating wetlands.

Sally is really taking CAR a step forward through her PhD focusing on the analysis of the CAR database that to date includes 7900 roadcounts. For various reasons it would be great if any of you would be willing to count your route once a month or once every two months for a year. Or even to do an extra count before and/or after the normal CAR count. Sally will be doing extra counts herself, but she cannot possibly do as many as she would ideally like to do. So if you have the time and necessary enthusiasm (and funds!) to help with this, we would really appreciate it if you could let us know. We are delighted that the whole Humansdorp precinct has offered to do two extra counts this year, while Graham Kletz and George Hattigh have offered to do more frequent counts. I am thrilled that Sally will be able to draw important information from the vast data set you have all been gathering – there are few such long-term data sets.



Graded river on OV29

RESULTS

Mistakes and misprints: search them out!

Please check the figures given for your route in this newsletter against your records, and report any discrepancies immediately. I found two errors that I missed in Newsletter 25! The route marked KD09 that Jeff Hilliar counted was actually KD12, it was re-numbered a while ago. On WU07 Bob James and team noted the absence of **Southern Black Korhaan** in a particular area (not Northern Black Korhaan).

I hope you received the email about the website report on the summer count. If not please let me know so that I can include your address on the listserver René Navarro set up for me. The website report is on the new ADU webpage above, click on CAR, then Newsletters.

Date of winter CAR count

The date for the winter count is **Saturday, 25 July 2009**. Start your count 1–2 hours after sunrise and please make every effort to 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 so that someone else can do it if you are not able to shortly after the count date. The summer count in 2010 will be on Saturday, 30 January.

Count information

Please check that you are familiar with the korhaan calls in your region before you count, as these are the only species that can be recorded by call only. The **CAR 13 Roadcount Form** and the **Route Description Form** are enclosed. It is nearly five years since you filled in the Route Description form so I hope you will be willing to fill it in again, this count and next count if possible so that we have both seasons for the agricultural information. We really appreciate this as it is most useful information in interpreting the CAR results. To save postage please download the CAR leaflet from the webpage, under Information Sheets – thank you!

Remember that if a bird is flying, you record the habitat as “indeterminate”, unless you disturbed it in which case write down the habitat that it took off from.

If you know in advance that you will not be able to count on the set date, please let your Precinct Organiser know so that they can arrange for someone else to count your route on the correct date.

Do check your form carefully making sure that all the details are filled in and please make a conspicuous note if you can't complete your route or have to do it in a different direction. Try to send in your form by **mid-September, but definitely keep a copy yourself!** Unfortunately there are often some forms that go astray in the post or fax! **Please indicate on the form if you are willing to receive the newsletter and form as pdf documents by email**, or download these from the website. It helps enormously if you send your form to your Precinct Organiser promptly, as they can check for missing information immediately. This saves Denise and I a huge amount of time in following up queries.



Photographs of habitat

This is optional. If you haven't sent photos, please refer to Newsletter 22, as this section is unchanged.

- Abbreviations - Abbreviations - Abbreviations - Abbreviations - Abbreviations -

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:

Southern Ground-Hornbill = GH	Korhaans: Blue = UK	Storks: Black = BS
Southern Bald Ibis = BI	Karoo = KK	White = WS
Spur-winged Goose = SG	White-bellied = WBK	Abdim's = AS
Secretarybird = SEC	Black-bellied = BBK	Yellow-billed = YS
Black Harrier = HAR	Southern Black/Black = SBK	Marabou = MS
Black-headed Heron = BHH	Northern Black/Whitequilled = NBK	
Goliath Heron = GOL		
Bustards: Kori = KB, Ludwig's = LB, Denham's/Stanley's = DB		
Cranes: Blue = BC, Grey Crowned = CC, Wattled Crane = WC		Oribi = OR

CAR logo

It seems that CAR participants are pure citizen scientists as I have only had two responses to the appeal for a logo design! So this is a last appeal, maybe your creative friends or family could develop a suitable logo for CAR. We would like to give a prize to the designer of the selected logo. The successful designer will be able to choose two ADU publications as a prize. This competition is open to anyone and entries will be accepted until 31 August 2009. Please post or email them to me.

The logo can be designed digitally or by hand. It may be in colour, or plain black and white. There are no restrictions, but do keep the following in mind:

- A simple design is usually most effective
- The design must be well-suited for colour and black and white printing
- It must be relevant to CAR
- Ensure that the logo is well defined and of high quality
- It should be well balanced and scalable
- It must be easily recognisable
- It must be unique.

Email addresses

It is very important that you alert me to any email address changes, especially as many of you are receiving CAR count information this way.

Project material on the website

If you are missing any project material you can download it from the CAR webpage, <http://aduserver2.uct.ac.za/car/httpdocs/index.php>. Project material is available in Afrikaans as well. The **interim CAR summer count report** is also here, with colour photos, as well as past newsletters.

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 or email list, do send me their contact details.

CAR Report

The eight-year CAR report is still available, the cost (including postage) is R150.

CAR support

We have really appreciated funding from the Critical Ecosystem Partnership Fund (CEPF); this project has come to an end and I am about to write the final report. Thankfully we are still receiving core funding from SANBI. We are also grateful for the last instalment of funding through the Darwin Initiative project 15/002 through partnership with the South African Crane Working Group (SACWG) and the Zoological Society of London. As usual there is still a shortfall in the budget.

Two bird clubs, the Somerset West Bird Club and BirdLife Border, have been incredibly supportive and consistently send a donation annually. Our thanks also go to Jean Spearpoint for her long-term involvement in ADU projects and recent donation to CAR on finally retiring from CAR counts. Norman Elwell, a past CAR participant, who regularly sends his African Black Oystercatcher monitoring results, also kindly sent a donation.

I would like to thank Barbi Forsyth for writing up about the January Chrissiesmeer count in *Bokmakierie*. Pat Hulley, Bo Bonnievie and Adrian Craig wrote reports on their counts in the *Diaz Diary*. Res Altwegg, who was in the ADU but now works at SANBI, and Mark Anderson had their paper “Rainfall in arid zones: possible effects of climate change on the population ecology of blue cranes” printed in *Functional Ecology* this year! An article I wrote on the trends in populations of the three crane species has just appeared in *Indwa*, the journal of the South African Crane Working Group published by the Endangered Wildlife Trust.

Big Birds on Farms project

This project, that began in November 2006 and has taken CAR a significant step forward, is finally ending. It has aimed to promote best practice in land management for the stewardship of biodiversity. This has been achieved through consultation with landowners, conservancies, CapeNature, the Department of Agriculture and others within the agricultural sector to assist in developing recommendations regarding conservation and management of biodiversity. In recent months I have given public presentations and workshops involving landowners and agricultural extension staff to communicate these findings in the Swartland and Overberg districts. An illustrated booklet is currently being typeset by Marja Wren-Sargent that will assist in implementation of twelve measures (the “Desirable Dozen”) that have emerged to conserve biodiversity. It has taken a long time to source funding for publishing this booklet, but we finally have just enough. We are incredibly grateful to the McDowell Trust, JAH Environmental Consultancy and Landcare for their financial support. Landcare has also generously offered to distribute the booklet. Huge thanks are due to Ann Hiemstra, a previous Free State participant, and Maria Andela, who coordinates the Beaufort West routes, for volunteering to spend many hours translating the booklet into Afrikaans.

The last six months have been very busy with the presentations, mainly to farmers. In February I spoke to about eighty farmers at a Caledon Landbouvereniging Vergadering (LVV). In March a presentation was given to about forty farmers at a Darling LVV in the Swartland. In April I met with about fifteen small

scale farmers belonging to the Koorland Kleinboere LVV near Swellendam and managed my first presentation in Afrikaans! (Another benefit of living in Villiersdorp!) I was also invited to speak about conserving biodiversity at the Breede River Winelands Rotary Club meeting in Robertson. As a result of the meeting at the end of last year at the Department of Agriculture I also met with Agricultural Extension Officers in Bredasdorp. I have really appreciated all the contacts I have made through this project.

Ringed birds

Ringed Blue Cranes were seen on OV12 and OV17. Do look out for colour-ringed cranes or other species at all times and report details to SAFRING.

Bustard Workshop

In May Sally and I were invited to the BirdLife SA Bustard/Korhaan workshop. Mark Anderson, Executive Director of BirdLife SA, called this group together as six of the ten South African bustards are threatened Red Data species, the most important threats being habitat destruction and power-line mortalities. The information you have collected was useful and Sally was able to summarise this informa-

tion for the workshop. As a result of this workshop a Bustard Working Group has been established. I am thrilled about this as many of these species have dramatic displays and their conservation has received very little attention to date. Studies by Mark and the University of Cape Town's Dr Andrew Jenkins, have found that, on average, about one Ludwig's Bustard collides with every one kilometre of power-line in the Karoo every year. There are some 16,000 km of power-lines criss-crossing the Karoo indicating the potential severity of this problem!

South African Crane Working Group www.ewt.org.za

Earlier this year, The African Cranes, Wetlands and Communities (ACWAC), an International Crane Foundation (ICF) / Endangered Wildlife Trust (EWT) Partnership, concentrating on crane research and conservation issues north of South Africa, amalgamated with EWT's SACWG that focuses on crane research within South Africa. Kerryn Morrison is now managing all crane conservation activities within the EWT. If any of you would like to receive the SACWG electronic newsletter do let me know.

SACWG urgently need colour-ring re-sightings, so do keep an eye on those crane legs at all times of the year and if you have a telescope or digital camera these do help. If you have any information about roost sites let us know, as this is most useful information.

Southern Bald Ibis project

Kate Henderson would appreciate any sightings of Southern Bald Ibis being sent to her at ibis@bird-life.org.za. For the first time Southern Bald Ibis (7) were recorded on EP01, between Steytlerville and

Willowmore by Patrick Brett and Denise Hoffmann of BirdLife Eastern Cape. This is the first CAR sighting of this species so far south.

Southern Ground Hornbills

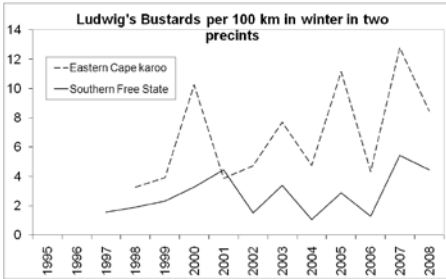
No Ground Hornbills were recorded on CAR routes in January. But Stooks Wilton, John Shire and Sandy Sargent saw two adults and a juvenile on a farm 6.5 km before their route, KG05, started. Do send in **any sightings of this threatened species at any time of year** to Scott Ronaldson on 013 7355550 or scottr@ewt.org.za. If possible please supply coordinates or the exact area.

Thank you!

Thank you so much for all the time you give to CAR and especially for bearing the transport costs! I was most grateful that the petrol price came down before the January count, but it has crept up again! I have really appreciated all the help from Precinct Organisers particularly while the Big Birds on Farms project has taken much of my time. Thank you for maintaining contact with participants, for phoning, sending reminders regarding outstanding forms and for following up on missing information on forms.

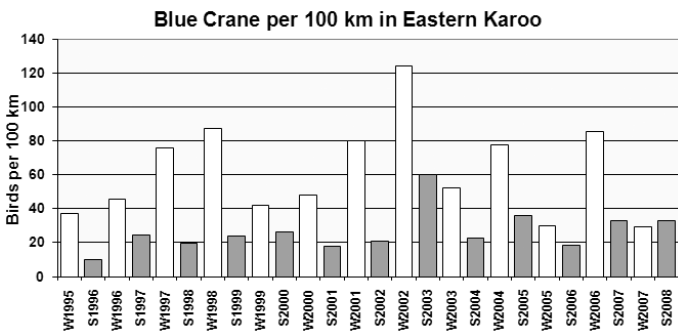
Denise Lesch has been a star capturing the road-count forms so accurately, her checking is obviously very thorough. Thank you also to Linda Tsipa, for saving me time by editing the tables for the newsletter, despite many other demands on her time. Marja Wren-Sargent has typeset this newsletter in her usual cheerful manner.

Kind regards to you all,
Donella Young,
Project Coordinator



COUNT RESULTS SUMMER 2008

28th Karoo Large Terrestrial Bird Survey (KLTBS), Northern Cape



Thank you very much to those who counted in January. There has been a dip in participation in the KLTBS, which is inevitable when there is change and an ornithologist as active and enthusiastic as Mark Anderson leaves and is not replaced immediately. Fortunately Ronelle Visagie, who has assisted Mark, has been able to continue sending out the count information. So I do hope this is a temporary dip. As I wrote in the opening General section this survey is very important, as it is the only area in the Northern Cape where monitoring is taking place of these special birds that range in relatively untransformed farm lands. These farms are criss-crossed by huge power-lines that are an undeniable threat to these large birds.

I was glad to meet Elsabe Swart and Christine Pienaar from the Northern Cape Department of Tourism, Environment and Conservation earlier this year and they are very keen that this survey continues too.

Nineteen 20-kilometre routes were counted on 31st January covering a total distance of 450 km. White Storks were recorded on four transects. Ronelle reported

Number of birds counted in January 2009 census in Karoo											
Route	Km	ADU No.	Observers	BC	KK	LB	NBK	SEC	UK	WS	Other spp.
NK031	20	2165, 2259	Raymond & Santa Swenson	1//			8//				
NK032	20	2165, 2259	Raymond & Santa Swenson	14//1			2//				3DB, 3KB
NK033	20	2165, 2259	Raymond & Santa Swenson	4//			2//				
NK071	20	1580	Petrus van der Merwe	1//		28//	5//			2//	
NK072	20	1580	Petrus van der Merwe	2//		22//	3//	1//		73//	
NK073	50	1580	Petrus van der Merwe			5//					
NK141	20	499	Henri Smith							4//	
NK142	20	499	Henri Smith		5//		4//			5//	
NK143	20	499	Henri Smith	5//		3//				100//	
NK181	20	1579	Diana Greathead				5//				
NK182	20	1579	Diana Greathead	16//		3//	5//		3//		
NK183	20	1579	Diana Greathead	2//		1//					2DB
NK231	20	509	Ronelle Visagie	9//	2//	32//	6//			23//	
NK232	20	509	Ronelle Visagie			5//	5//	2//			
NK233	20	509	Ronelle Visagie			8//					
Total	330			55	118	100	56	3	12	198	5DB, 3KB
Birds/100 km				16.7	35.8	30.3	17.0	0.9	3.6	60.0	
NA01	48	1999	Elton le Roux		3//	1//	3//				3KB

that she was given a White Stork ring from Orania that was recovered from a bird that was ringed in Croatia in March this year! Surprisingly only one Blue Crane chick was recorded. As you can see from the graph the Blue Crane density was the lowest since the 1996 summer count. Marina Beal did a recce for a new route. Unfortunately Lorette Luscombe's forms went astray in the post, but as only one Secretarybird was seen, I will capture these details. Unfortunately Luke Kock's forms are packed away with the July 2008 forms, as the Department has just moved.

I would like to thank Mark Anderson, who is now Director of BirdLife, for the tremendous amount of work he did to initiate this survey and arrange and maintain it for fourteen years. Mark has also played an important role in producing biannual reports on the surveys, editing the eight year report and I have certainly appreciated his knowledge and experience.

Thank you to all of you for counting and to Ronelle for continuing to organise these counts.



Free State



With heavy rains in the northern Free State on the days leading up to Saturday 31 January, the counts in the North-eastern (FN) and North-western (FW) precincts were postponed by a week; nevertheless, 20 routes (covering 1246 km) were done in FW (with one route impassable) and 17 (1101 km) in FN. The Southern precinct (FS) was drier and 67 routes (4500 km) were surveyed without any problems.

The Northern Black Korhaan was again dominant in FW, with 53 birds/100 km, a higher density than in FS. Next most abundant was the White Stork (446), but with 84% of these seen by Johan Hardy and family along FW36, west of Welkom. There were only 46 Abdim's Storks and Dries and Leanda Nel recorded all except one of them along FW55, north of Welkom. The two Blue Cranes seen by Tjaart Venter along FW46, between Edenville and Lindley, were the only ones recorded in FW.

Though there were more Blue Cranes (113) in FN, 107 of them were along one route north-west of Harrismith (FN52, surveyed by Johann Strauss), while 42 of the 49 Grey Crowned Cranes were seen by Rick Dillon, covering FN31 north-east of Harrismith. The White Stork was by far the most abundant bird in this precinct, with 74/100 km, but with 311 (38%) along Harry Illsley's route (FN43, impassable in one spot and completed by taking a long detour) south of Memel. Interestingly, not one Abdim's Stork was seen in this precinct.

Both migrant storks were present in fair numbers in FS, as well as five Black Storks, three Yellow-billed and also two Marabous! (One south of Clocolan by Johan Cloete, FS 85 and the other was seen by me at the start of FS09, just west of Trompsburg.) Blue Cranes (11.5/100 km) were more abundant here than the previous summer (4.3/100 km); while most were in flocks of non-breeding birds, 17 chicks were spotted with breeding pairs. Ludwig's Bustard (2.4/100 km) was also more numerous this summer (1.3 in 2008).

Many thanks to Brian Colahan for this report and for coordinating these precincts!



Number of birds counted in January 2009 census in southern Free State												
Route	Km	ADU No.	Observers	BC	BHH	LB	NBK	SEC	SG	UK	WS	Other spp.
FS06	72.8	700	Johan Watson	107/5/	3//	21//	25/1//	1//	1//	14//	160//	
FS07	59.8	1746	Angelo Nichas			8//	5//	1//		6//	240//	1HAR
FS08	69	6, 1429	André & Annatjie Schlemmer	6//	1//		5//	1//	27//	7//		
FS09	61.3	24	Brian Colahan	6//4			18//					1MS
FS12	56	662, 1180	Herman & Janet Kleynhans	33//	3//	49//	65//	8//	16//	41//	35//	123AS, 1YS
FS14	76.2	2249	Manietjie Jordaan				3//	39//			80//	
FS15	74	1056	P Crouse				11//	31//	3//		7//	
FS17	73.3	1620, 204	Dawie & Johan Kok	10//			69//			3//		
FS18	74.5	684	Louise Coetzee				39//	2//	6//			
FS19	88	2263	Pieter & Gela van Heerden		1//		53//	1//	2//		35//	
FS20	68	2171	Sandra Bishop		2//		30//	1//	16//	1//		
FS21	60.2	682	Leon Barkhuizen				34//	1//			23//	
FS27	78.7	694	Erika Schulze	2//	1//	5//	4//		33//			
FS31	71.8	259	Johan van Niekerk		1//		29//		9//	10//		
FS35	74.6	1258	Hannes Blom		2//		52//	29//	10//		1YS	
FS40	70.2	2107	Cornelia Squirra				19//					
FS42	70.4	952	Kevin Predry	2//			8//	1//	1//		11//	
FS43	78	1801	Christo de Meyer				92//					
FS47	84	1055, 1798	Johan & Henriette van den Berg				22//	1//	10//			
FS48	75	1808	Ockie Boshoff	1//	1//		49//	2//	1//	3//	11//	
FS50	78	1058	Frans Marais		2//	1//	6//			47//		3KK
FS51	78	24, 1262	Brian Colahan & Janine Liefbrig	15//	1//	6//	15//	5//	7//	5//	1//	1BS
FS54	59.3	1262, 818	Janine Liefbrig & E Beemster-Boer		3//	1//	76//	2//		3//		80AS
FS55	57.6	864	Sawas Vrahimis	14//	2//		60//	2//	5//	2//	309//	
FS56	69.7	988	Stephanus Buys		4//		145//		37//	7//	3//	197AS
FS58	80.2	863	Pierre Nel		1//		56//	6//	12//			3AS
FS60	71.3	2260	Ilse Roets				12//	3//	2//		10//	1BS
FS62	54	2298	Lynden Lund				28//			14//		
FS65	79.6	864	Sawas Vrahimis		1//		24//		8//			
FS66	55.6	1399	Tom Mostert		1//		23//					
FS67	68.2	950	Daan Muller		3//		23//		4//	6//		1BS, 1YS
FS68	68.4	1051	Werner Böing				28//		56//	3//	12//	
FS69	76	1065	Deon du Plessis		2//	2//	5//	1//	6//	9//	14//	
FS70	59.5	1150, 1151	Abrie & Helène Bam		5//	2//			13//	7//	5//	
FS73	69	1723, 1805	Callie & Renett Bam		9//			4//	12//	15//	2//	
FS76	42.5	2150	Arnold van der Westhuizen		4//	3//		2//	1//			
FS77	54.2	1153	Schalk Burger					3//	7//	5//		
FS79	52	1397	Dewald Liebenberg			2//	25//			10//	3//	
FS80	90.2	24	Brian Colahan			2//	5//	2//	14//	5//		
FS83	49.4	2214, 2215	Hennie & Trix de Bruin		4//				5//	9//		
FS84	52	1297, 2053	Johan & Daleen Coertzen		1//			1//				
FS85	75.2	285	JB Cloete		5//		34//		7//	6//	2//	1MS
FS86	67.1	24	Brian Colahan				232//		4//	6//		
FS87	55	2368	Annalie van der Vyfer		2//		14//			14//		
FS88	62	1949	Wimpie Geyer		2//		53//		16//	10//		
FS91	59.3	641	Rick Nuttall		6//		93//		12//	5//		
FS92	68	1201	Fritz Krohn		3//				20//		1//	1BS
FS93	47.4	700	Johan Watson	54//1/		39//	10//	5//		9//		
FS94	70.7	2296, 2297	Eric & Magda Schroeder	2//			15//		6//			
FS95	86	821	Coenien Erasmus	6//1/	2//	8//	3//	1//				1BS
FS97	58	1574, 1804	Dennis Oliphant		5//	1//	1//	1//	9//	1//	1//	
FS101	61.7	1046	Blackie de Swardt	11//	1//	3//		2//			7//	
FS103	57.6	1052	Duart Hugo				45//	1//	8//			
FS105	76.6	687	Riette Griesel	45/6/6	4//	11//	6//	1//	6//	10//		
FS106	50.1	102, 1946	Dawie de Swardt & Hennie Bester				22//	2//	2//			
FS107	72	1836, 1837	John & Dawnia Edgar							7//		
FS108	60	1140, 1141	John & Jill Moffett			7//			24//		54//	
FS109	60	2150, 10833, 10311, 10832	Arnold van der Westhuizen & team		1//		6//	1//		8//		1HAR
FS111	62.9	691	Willie Mostert				35//					2HAR
FS112	60	1747	Momé Pretorius				67//		19//	20//		
FS113	94.6	1616, 2366	Danie Krynauw & M Labuschagne		2//		3//	4//	12//	32//		
FS116	47	1799	Peter Divall		1//		62//		2//			
FS117	67.7	691	Willie Mostert		1//		22//	1//				
FS118	66.5	24	Brian Colahan	175//7		5//	22//	5//		10//	3//	
FS119	74	1140, 1141	John & Jill Moffett		9//		56//		14//			
FS120	76	1889	JC Labuschagne		3//		100//		8//	1//	3//	
FS122	64	1057, 2378	Laurens & Istelle Goosen		1//		24//	1//	17//	2//	15//	
Total	4500			519	113	183	2145	78	547	368	1044	403AS, 5BS, 3YS
Birds/100 km				11.5	2.5	4.1	47.7	1.7	12.2	8.2	23.2	3KK, 2MS, 4HAR,

Number of birds counted in January 2009 census in north-eastern Free State												
Route	Km	ADU No.	Observers	BC	BHH	BI	CC	SEC	SG	UK	WS	Other spp.
FN25	71	719, 720	Georg & Erla Wandrag			6//					37//	
FN26	65	606	Thomas Wessels		1//				20//		5//	
FN31	82	2109	R Dillon	4//	5//	83//	12/20/10		11/11/		151//	2BS, 2HAR
FN35	55	946	Natie Wessels		8//				2//		109//	
FN37	59.1	2043, 2042	Martin & Melanie Potgieter	8//				1//	4//			9NBK
FN39	64.3	1433	Peter Millin	9//2/	12//						20//	
FN40	66.3	2055, 2056	Hansie & Amie Joubert	1//				1//			29//	
FN41	81.8	1045	GJ Vermeulen	5//	45//			2//		2//	4//	13NBK
FN42	71	1517	Henk Venter	13//						14//	5//	
FN43	51.2	706, 1812	Harry & Christa Illsley	12//	21//	4//					311//	
FN46	64	718, 1813	Gerhard & E van Deventer		4//	3//					10//	
FN48	46	605, 1820	Janet & Koos Lourens									
FN51	64	1363	Ina van Rensburg	7//					3//		72//	
FN52	71	717	Johan Strauss	107//	10//	39//			47//		1//	
FN57	62.3	1932	Pietre Enslin		3//				1/2//			
FN58	63	705	Paulus Fihlo	2//	22//	21//		1//	24//	5//	63//	
FN60	64	1505	Brian Barnes		3//				3//	4//		91NBK
Total	1101			113	109	231	49	5	128	25	817	2BS, 2HAR,
Birds/100 km				10.3	9.9	21.0	4.5	0.5	11.6	2.3	74.2	113NBK



Sally Hofmeyr captured these three Blue Cranes doing a wonderful fly-by on OV29 between Riviersonderend and Greyton.

Number of birds counted in January 2009 census in north-western Free State									
Route	Km	ADU No.	Observers	BC	BHH	NBK	SEC	SG	Other species
FW01	75	2274	Margaret Williams		1//			2//	
FW02	43.6	2275	Chris Farrington		1//	9//		20//	
FW13	56.4	1515	Johann Potgieter		3//	3//		6//	5YS
FW16	68	1172, 1749	Pieter & Cathy Lubbe			5//			
FW18	50.1	1268	Herman Jordaan			112//			
FW28	55.5	1162	Piet van der Merwe		8//	9//			3WS
FW34	77.2	1163	Des Walker		5//	99//		29//	
FW36	82.5	28, 1809	Johan & Amelia Hardy		10//	41//		94//	376WS
FW42	63.4	1646	Andre Hoffmann		2//				4WS
FW43	64.2	2261	Chris Daphne		3/1//	43//		12//	
FW45	52.5	1563, 1824	Gert & Elize Jordaan		2//	10//		23//	30WS
FW46	58	2262	Tjaart Venter	2//		30//		5/3//	1AS, 4UK
FW47	55.2	1890, 1891	Greg & Janine Goosen			57//		4//	10UK
FW50	68.1	1938, 1939	Helm & Elizabeth Lekaota	2//	14//			17//	
FW51	79	1253	JJ den Houting	2//	109//				8UK, 1WS
FW52	56	2201	Mary Littlewood		6//	3//		6//	
FW54	55.2	2376	Chris Botha			21//		19//	
FW55	63.2	1936	Dries & Leanda Nel		21//	14//		29//2	45AS, 1BS, 32WS
FW58	62.3	1901, 1902	Stephen & Marietjie Hill		3//	6//			
FW61	60.3	10783	Alta Henning		2//	70//	1//	2//	2UK
Total	1246			2	71	656	1	273	46AS, 1BS, 24UK
									446WS, 5YS
Birds/100 km				0.2	5.7	52.7	0.1	21.9	

KwaZulu-Natal



There were heavy rains in this province during the week prior to the count. I am encouraged to see that the Grey Crowned Crane density was higher than last summer when it was at an all time low. Paul and Bev Garner counted the most White Storks (282) in KZN on KD02 and with storks on most KZN routes their overall density was the second highest since counts began in 1997. In 2005 the density in KZN was 249 birds per 100 km! Malcolm Rivett recorded a surprising

eight Black Storks on KG03. Malcolm, who is a vet in the area, also saw 14 Blue Cranes and wrote that it is "Great to see the Blue Cranes slowly making a come back in East Griqualand".

Johan de Villiers noted that on his route, KN01, a stretch along the Slang River that used to be fields of pasture and fallow lands and usually species rich, was now planted with cash crops resulting in fewer species. Klaus Heyer saw

258 White Storks, 22 Grey Crowned Cranes and 47 Southern Bald Ibises on his route, KN06, where there were flooded wetlands.

I would like to thank AP Keeve for taking over the coordination of the Vryheid routes. Sadly Carol Horne, who has been a very active birder and counted KU02 for many years, lost a battle against cancer earlier this year. Professor Steven Piper, who recently started participating in CAR, died very unexpectedly in March. There have been many special obituaries in various Bird Club newsletters, as Steve was a well-known ornithologist and entertaining speaker.

Do continue to count Oribi (OR) and use the following abbreviations for gamebirds: **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.

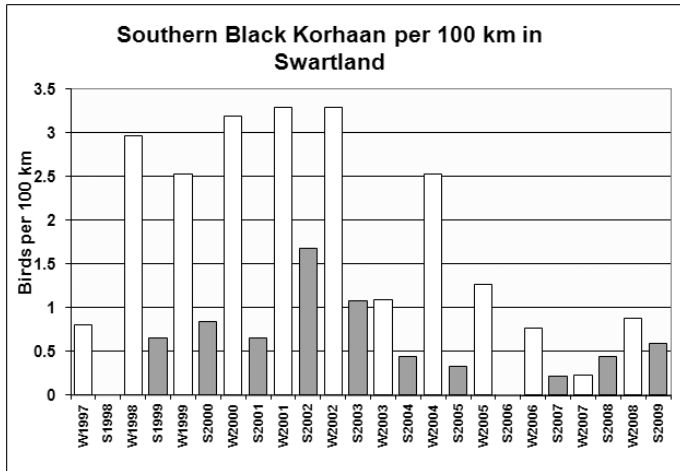
Thank you to Tim Wood for all he does as Regional Coordinator of CAR in KZN.

Number of birds counted in January 2009 census in KwaZulu-Natal													
Route	Km	ADU No.	Observers	BC	BHH	BI	CC	DB	HG	SE	SG	WS	Other species
KD01	80	2084, 2085	Henery & Liz Bugden		24//	6//	2//		1//		15/1//	72//	
KD02	63	677, 1711	Paul & Bev Garner		5//	11//			2//			282//	
KD03	74	2334, 2336	Douglas & Tarryn Long		2//								
KD04	48.9	2352, 2354	Peter & Jo-Anne Smith		6//	2//					2//	59//	
KD05	52	1255, 1745	Dennis & Sonja Holmes		1//						5//	19//	
KD06	51	1709	Myles & Carol Ellerke								2//	102//	
KD08	59	1834	Peter Struweg		3//								
KD10	26	736, 1179	Tony & Val Cross		4//	48//				9//	14//		
KD11	58	736, 1179	Tony & Val Cross		1//	10//						1//	
KD12	63	2285, 1716	Lynne Ruddle, M Post & N Leveridge		2//	18//					1//	116//	
KE01	74.6	675	Annemarie Röhrs		1//							45//	
KG02	53.7	623, 1073	Brian Byers & Pat Lowry		3//		42//	5//			12//	188//	3WC
KG03	54	626	Malcolm Rivett	14//			32//				6//	77//	8BS
KG04	73.2	627	Bob Williams				56//	4//			75//	87//	
KG05	53.2	629, 2308, 2310	Stooks Wilton, J Shire & S Sargent	2//	13//		9//	4//			36//	77//	3WC
KG07	47	630	Kobus Nel		6//		5//				19//	29//	
KG08	58	2086	Allan Geldart		1//		4//				21//	88//	
KG09	9.6	427, 428	Bruce & Pat Whittle	2/1//	2//		9//			1//	6//		
KG10	35.6	623	Brian Byers		3//		26//				6//	125//	
KL11	34	814	Ann Gray		3//				32/19//				
KM01	82.2	1904, 1905	Drummond & Gloria Densham		7//		3//	2//			9//	113//	4OR
KM02	72	2360	HS Nyker		5//							58//	
KM03	97.6	167	Pamela Nicol		5//		7//	2//			11//	33//	
KM04	35	474, 1610	Shirley Bennett & Betty Jones		1//		3//				3//	70//	2OR
KM05	76.7	1581	Evelyn Hughes	1//	1//		4//				1//	38//	3WC
KM06	92.1	1887, 1888	Alan & Bernardine Turner		12//		6//			2/1//		180//	2OR
KM08	59.9	2280	Diane Mason		4//		7//				7//	46//	
KN01	65	927, 1756	Johan & Christine de Villiers		1/1//						1//	67//	4SS
KN03	54	1609, 1754	Andre & Hettie Bouwer		5//	31//		2//			6/2//	30//	
KN04	46.7	925	Alan Schwikkard		3//	6//			4//		12//	178//	1RWF
KN05	38.5	1071, 1742	John & Kathy Sharpe		3//						10//		2NS
KN06	52.2	2036	Klaus Heyer	3//	4//	44/3//	22//		6//		3//	258//	
KO01	56.7	425, 1829, 1963	Gavin & Sandi Calverley & Sally Calitz		4//							7//	
KP01	63.9	1792	Frik Lemmer		3//						3//	34//	
KU01	68	2015, 740	Gayle & John Ellison	2/1//	12//	51//	9//	5/1//	6//	2//	33/7//	259//	2OR
KU02	63	10451, 10491, 2324, 2350	G Kletz, R Clark, S Piper & B Osborne		11//		33//	3//			3//	257//	4OR, 2WC
KV01	84	1683	AP Keeve				8//				10//	44//	
KV02	60.4	2016, 2001	Paul & Ria Steffensen	6/1//	3//				21/5//	6//	14//		1BBK, 15SS
KV04	74	1722	Charl Oberholster							2//			1WBK
Total	2310			33	165	230	287	24	106	11	354	3053	1BBK, 8BS, 2NS, 14OR, 19SS, 11WC, 1RWF, 1WBK
Birds/100 km				1.4	7.1	10.0	12.4	1.0	4.6	0.5	15.3	132.2	

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 - Paupiersburg precinct, KU - Underberg precinct, KV - Vryheid precinct

Swartland precinct

It was obviously very hot in the Swartland with a heat haze and wind by 11 am. The road works on the R311 on SW02 continue. Fiona Hellman remarked on the complete absence of Southern Black Korhaan over the last few counts. Fiona travels extensively in the Swartland and wrote that this latter species seems scarce



Number of birds counted in January 2009 census in Swartland							
Route	Km	ADU No.	Observers	BC	BHH	SG	Other species
SW01	75.5	1970	Fiona Hellmann	23/4/	2//	8//	
SW02	76.8	503, 1077	Sean & Louise Tucker		1//	45/10/	
SW03	63.7	574, 1080	Sylvia Ledgard & Pat Waddell	7/4/	3//	8//	
SW04	62.5	1286, 1287	Philbert & Henriette Melck	6/1/		14/6/	
SW06	73	1359	Reg le Roux	35/8/2	5//	194//	
SW07	49	1366, 2315, 1122	L Teare, K Drummond & L Reynolds	22/4/4	11/1/	27//	
SW08	70.5	1474, 106	Bruce MacKenzie & Mel Tripp	22//1	5//	85/8/3	
SW09	61.9	2362, 2364	Donny & Hannali Malherbe	34/4/	7//	70/48/	
SW10	85.9	678	Ferdinand Bruwer	4/1/	11//	4//	2SBK
SW11	65.7	479, 1081	David & Anne Dixon	3//	13/1/	1//	2SEC
SW12	80.7	2207, 2208	Nicolaas & Erna Mostert	21/4/	1//	69//	1SBK
SW13	50.1	673	Elna Slabber	4/2/1	3//	51//	2SBK
SW14	52.3	506, 1882	Riaan & Marika van der Walt	14/2/	6//	34//	
SW15	61	2006, 1135	Angela & Jens Oelbützel	33//	5//	37//	1WS
Total	929			270	76	722	1WS,2SEC,5SBK
Birds/100 km				29.1	8.2	77.8	

Number of birds counted in January 2009 census in Overberg										
Route	Km	ADU No.	Observers	BC	BHH	DB	KK	SEC	WS	Other species
OV01	56	229, 2311, 1063	Inès & Duncan Cooke & Petra Rigg	54/1/	5//				127//	71//
OV02	63.5	802, 801, 221	Ann & Keith McAdam & D Butcher	125/8/2	9/4/				5//	352//
OV03	49.3	213, 214	Tom & Freya Brett	87//3	4//	1//			4//	23//
OV04	26.7	213, 214	Tom & Freya Brett	55/4/	6//			2//		113//
OV05	69.5	228, 649	John Carter, Tony Wienand, B Boer	135/5/3	11//	1//	6//	2//	2//	426//
OV06	53	1655, 2110	Stuart & Ruth McLennan	78/14/2	16//		3//		5/2/	292//
OV07	67.2	496, 2184	Ken Price & Hester Snyman	195/12/	19//			3//	3/1/	771//
OV08	73	492	Keith Moodie	277/8/2	32//	4//	1//		4//	70//
OV09	46.3	234, 239	Craig & Sarah Thom & Bruce Squiers	145/18/2	14/1/	5//		2//	209//	1033//
OV10	57	56, 1585	Pieter & Ann Albertyn	144/4/1	8/5/		3//			374//
OV11	60.7	246, 245	Madalene Loubser & Sheila Siebert	100/3/4	13//	8//			21//	73//
OV12	57.4	215, 216, 1380, 1381	Heather Busby, Dawn, Rory & Gill	92/2/7	27//	16//				196//
OV13	69	520, 671, 672	Jill Mortimer, Rene, Ann & H Wetmore	353/15/7	27//	3//	2/1/	1//	11//	262//
OV14	91	123, 1922	John Coats & Maureen Aucamp	150/28/3	22//	1//			1//	118//
OV15	59	2112, 2113	John Jones & Myra Jones	73/18/5	10//	1//		1//	1//	576//
OV16	62	249, 1379	Pierre van den Berg & Willem du Toit	63/5/2	12//		2//			97//
OV17	62	878	Lee Burman	142/1/7	29//	1//			9//	83//
OV18	49.6	240, 1712	Wicus & Hanlie Leeuwner	198/5/21	7//				91//	110//
OV19	62.3	219, 1632	Ronnie Crowther & Christine Wallace	37/11/1	14//	3//		2//	16//	158//
OV20	57.3	1325, 1441, 2344, 2342	Neville & A Passmore, L & B Napier	49//2	15//				11//	223//
OV21	64.7	2136, 2181	Wilson & Christina Terblanche	49/11/1	19/1/	1//				3//
OV22	56.7	1660	Sally Adam	159//	22/6/			2//	184//	20//
OV23	56	1062	Andrew Marshall	2//	9/4/					14//
OV24	57.5	1211, 255, 256	June D'Alton, Dave & Sue Whitelaw	35/7/1	9/1/	9//			24/7/	29//
OV26	19.8	871	Jeffrey Arizon & 3 Teslaarsdal pupils	27//	1//					29//
OV27	65	2071, 2072	Buddy & Jenny Mockford	23/5/	7//	6//			10//	128//
OV28	39	1463	Frans de Graaff	15/3/2	7//					7//
OV29	26.7	991, 2307	Donella Young & Sally Hofmeyr	27/2/3	4//				6//	95//
OV33	59.4	1463	Frans de Graaff	22/5/4	8//	9//		3//	9//	18//
OV36	40	1469	Avril Young	165/22/13	9//				21//	24//
OV37	34.8	1777, 1778, 2169, 2170	Rae & Ann Gordon & Wintertons	88/3/2	3//				18//	4//
Total	1711			3484	420	69	18	18	802	5793
Birds/100 km				203.6	24.5	4.0	1.1	1.1	46.9	338.5
OV34	61	1550, 1551	Heynè & Sharon Brink	6//	5//	2//			41//	12HAR, 1SBK

all through this region. The accompanying histogram certainly confirms this, with numbers being lower in the last five years. Reg le Roux had the highest total of Blue Cranes (45) and Spur-winged Geese (194) in this region.

I would like to thank Keith and Rena Harrison for many years of counting SW05, they are retiring from counting. Keith is very involved as Chairperson of the West Coast Bird Club in promoting conservation in the many proposed developments up the West Coast.

David and Anne Dixon saw a juvenile Black-headed Heron being attacked by a Peregrine Falcon, which repeatedly hit it on the head till it landed on the road exhausted. When they stopped their car close by the falcon flew off. Angela and Jens Oelbützel had the unusual sighting of a White Stork and a pair of caracal!

Jan Hofmeyr counted 215 White Storks at the pig farm.

Overberg precinct

It was a beautiful day in the Overberg. Due to regular summer rains the region was generally greener than usual. The Blue Crane density was the highest recorded to date, while the White Stork density was the third highest. Jill Mortimer and her team recorded the highest total of Blue Cranes (375) while Craig Thom and his team saw 1033 White Storks on OV09. On OV36 Avril Young saw 22 Blue Crane juveniles and 13 chicks altogether. One breeding pair had two older chicks and two small ones. Frans de Graaff saw six pairs of breeding Blue Cranes on OV33, a route that has previously not had more than two pairs of breeding cranes, and quite often none in the past. Black Storks were seen on three routes, with three on OV03, Tom and Freya Brett's route. Heynè and Sharon Brink saw 10 Black Harriers and one juvenile, on their route through De Hoop Nature Reserve.

It has made such a difference to have Duncan and Inés Cooke coordinating this precinct, although I do miss the contact with you all. Please remember to fax or post your form directly to them: 20 Oakbridge Village, Bizweni Avenue, Somerset West 7130. Fax: 0865106470. If you need to contact Bronwyn Botha, the SACWG Regional Coordinator, please phone 082 3200911.

Beaufort West precinct

Forty Karoo Korhaans were seen on WB01 and Stefan and Madeleine Theron recorded twenty Blue Cranes on WB03.

Little Karoo precinct

I was glad to meet some of the Karoo observers and Laurel Bloch, who coordinates this precinct now, when I met the Breede River Winelands Rotary Club. Keith Poole, a Rotarian who has counted in this precinct, was very thoughtful in inviting them. Laurel noted that at 11.1 km along WK04 about 2.5 to 3 ha of renosterveld had been cleared, probably for cropping. Blue Cranes were seen on three of these Little Karoo routes.

Uniondale precinct

This precinct had the highest summer count of Blue Cranes since counts began in 2000. I was delighted to see that so many school learners from the Ruitersbos area assisted on WU07. It was extremely dry, so much so that Mike Euston-Brown wrote that it was "like counting in an arid semi desert".

Calitzdorp precinct

Mike and Carol Hewitt of the Rooiberg South Side Conservancy saw a caracal walking next to the road on their way home from counting WC02.



Number of birds counted in January 2009 census in other Western Cape precincts									
Route	Km	ADU No.	Observers	BC	BHH	KK	SG	Other species	
WB01	54	1101, 2346, 2348	Annatjie Mocke, M & A Oosthuizen			40//		1KB, 4LB	
WB03	58	1909	Stefan Theron	19/2/		8//		1LB, 1SEC	
WC01	41.4	1291, 1989	George Hattingh & Terry Robertson					1DB, 1SBK	
WC02	55	2293	Mike Hewitt	5//2	2//				
WK02	47.4	2139, 2314	Gilly & Jenny Schütte	4//	4//		12//		
WK03	42	2292, 2313	Adrius & Karin Rabie	2/2/	1//				
WK04	44.2	2138, 2182, 2140	Laurel Bloch, M Powell & M Ford	10/3/1	5/2/		2//	4HAR	
WK05	17.1	2138, 2182, 2140	Laurel Bloch, M Powell & M Ford		1//				
WU01	51	540	JP Esau & team			3//			
WU02	57	539	Jonas Witbooi & team	159//1/		1//	5//	2DB	
WU03	50.9	1392	Johnny de Jaar & team		4//				
WU04	35.2	1606, 2386	Natalie Baker & Barend le Roux						
WU05	70	297, 1520, 1521	Mike & G Euston-Brown & B du Plessis	179//1/	1//			1DB, 2WS	
WU06	13.5	1606, 2386	Natalie Baker & Barend le Roux		1//		7//	2WS	
WU07	66	2173, 2299, 2156	J Makampies, B James, A Pietersen & 16	13/1/1			1//		
WW01	50	1475	Alan Collett		4//			50WS	
Total	753			405	25	52	27	4DB,4HAR,1KB,5LB,1SBK,1SEC,54WS	
Birds/100 km				53.8	3.3	6.9	3.6		

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



Southern Black Korhaan by Wicus Leeuwer

Eastern Cape

A reminder to include Oribi in your counts, while scanning for CAR birds.

Most of the Eastern Cape was very dry this last summer, although parts of the north-eastern areas had received good rains. Sandy Stretton, who counts EE19, wrote that there was a huge influx of White Storks taking advantage of the locust invasion in December–early January. One flock numbered between 1500–2000 birds. During the CAR count there were White Storks on all the EE routes. Sandy also remarked that it was one of the best seasons for Blue Cranes and nine pairs were recorded breeding on his son's property and two adjoining farms. Sheila

Bell-Cross and Jim Feely counted 106 Grey Crowned Cranes on EE22, the highest total on a single route this count. I am sorry I forgot to thank Mark van Niekerk, who coordinated this precinct, when he left last year. Tanya Smith, of SACWG, is now coordinating these routes.

Peter Swift, Ian Field and Alan Thompson, who counted EB03, saw 33 Black-headed Herons, also the highest total on a single route this count. When Bo Bonnevie and his team decided to take an emaciated dog they came across to a nearby farm (it apparently belonged to a neighbour) they were invited by the farmer to go birding on his dam. They counted 250 birds and 15 species and have registered it as a CWAC site that they will count after their CAR count!

Yvonne Craig wrote the following in her report on the Humansdorp precinct: "All the usual vleis, ponds and dams had dried up considerably or in some cases, completely. Route EH04 had their best count ever as part of the route goes alongside the Gamtoos Valley in which there are several centre pivot irrigation systems. Everywhere else was so dry that more birds tended to use this area. It was the first time in 10 years that they have had Blue Crane on the route."

"Spur-winged Geese that were usually found in fair numbers on EH03 and EH06 were lacking in that only one occurred in each of these routes which were extremely dry. Both also experienced large tracts of burnt land in addition to the dry veld. In contrast the White Stork numbers increased this year. Denham's Bustard numbers were also down. Areas which they used to frequent had been burnt and that may explain why."

Bradley Gibbons, who counts EM01, saw no Blue Crane chicks and remarked on the drought. Ron Blaker established the new route EM02 south of Middleburg. On EP01 Pat Brett and Denise Hoffmann had the surprising sighting of seven Southern Bald Ibis, which is very far south. Thirteen were also recorded on EE11.

If you know someone who could continue a route, ES05, south of Somerset East, please let me know, as Andy Cheeseman has been counting it from Port Elizabeth and it is too far to travel!

Only one Oribi was recorded. Do remember to look out for this species for the Oribi Working Group, while scanning for birds.

Number of birds counted in January census 2009 in Eastern Cape													
Route	Km	ADU No.	Observers	BC	BHH	CC	DB	LB	SBK	SEC	SG	WS	Other species
EB01	63.5	175, 174	Kenneth & Gertie Griffith		5//	16//	1//				8//		
EB02	75	1398	Keith Marshall		9//	4//	3//						
EB03	68.3	2119	Peter Swift		33//	26//1					14//	143//	
EB04	63.1	1568, 1567, 1584	Ken & B Monfoort & W Perks		21//	2//	1//				2//	29//	
EB05	32.7	195	Phil Whittington	4//	3//		1//			2//	5//	28//	
EE01	44	2281	Jacky Steyler Lamer		1//	57//	1/2/	1//			5//	55//	
EE08	69.7	2236	Tanya Smith		1//	15//	12//3			2//	3//	15//	
EE11	56	1261	Mike Agenbag	30/2/		50//					17/9/	3//	13BI, 1UK
EE12	54	901	Jenni Brown	5/1/	1//	18//		2//		1//	6/7/	24//	
EE17	45	1929	Theuns Botha		1//	13//				1//	11//	14//	
EE18	39.8	1918	Les Larter	11//	7//	1//	5/2/				14/7/	108//	1UK
EE19	83.9	1130, 1583	Sandy & Hope Stretton	7/1/5/6	2//	2//		10//			38//	119//	1BS, 52UK
EE20	69	2382	Ina Bekker		5/1/	2//					10//	27//	
EE22	25.2	225, 2312	Sheila Bell-Cross & Jim Feely		7/1/	106//	4//						177//
EE23	43	2044, 2180	Desmond & Martie Schroeder								13//	2//	4UK
EG02	52.5	565, 1530	Pat Hulley & Lorraine Mullins	6//					1//	2//	2//	11//	
EG03	77.5	341, 2081, 2082	Bo Bonnevie, Jim & Eve Cambray	2//				2//	9/1/	1//		66//	2KB
EG04	60	161, 887	Adrian Craig & Nikki Köhly		1//				3//				
EH03	55	2289, 1771	Chris Barratt & Wendy Rosser	2//	12//		10/2/			1//		582//	
EH04	44	1767, 1766	Jill Tudhope & Peter Bosman	5//	7//								114//
EH05	39	1612, 1794, 301	Abel & H Bezuidenhout & C Cook	6//	1/1/	2//				1//	28//	1//	
EH06	56	312, 10045, 1975	Yvonne Craig, J Barnes & A Jones	36/4/2	13//	15//					1//	196//	
EK02	42.7	885	John Lardner-Burke		6//	3//				1//	11//	10R, 1WBK	
EK04	56.4	2210, 2209	John Potter & Sheila Walsh		2//	4//				1//	7//	12//	
EK05	62.5	1528	Laurie Wood		10//						79/10/	45//	
EM01	62	974, 2111	Bradley & Lee-Anne Gibbons	12//						2//			7NBK
EM02	56.9	2304	Ron Blaker	2//						1//			1KK, 1NBK, 5UK
EP01	74	635, 1244	Patrick Brett & Denise Hoffmann	37//				22//	3//	2//			7BI, 2KB, 10KK
EP02	66.6	83	Andrew Nixon	14//				23//	10//	1//		6//	1KB
EP04	69.6	869	Peter Hall						9//	2//		2//	12KK
EP06	52.5	2237	Michael Antrobus	19//				1//	4//		23//	5//	2KK
EP07	72.7	2245, 2246	Michael & Lesley Lord & family					7//		2//	1//		43NBK, 3UK
EP08	111	270, 10795, 10736	Dave Brown, Paddy & Ross	118//				8//					9KK
EP09	21.3	2237	Michael Antrobus										1//
EP10	42	1731, 2265	John & Rolene Bowker	6/2/				2//		1//			8KK, 22NBK
ES03	57.8	2147, 2303	Alison Drewnick & Fiona Munro	4//				12//	2//	1//			2KB, 3KK
ES04	47	1476, 1972	Judy & Zorb Caryer	19//				2//		2//			
ES07	37.4	1965, 2005	Alison Brown & Ros Turner	4//					6//	1//		1//	
ES08	52	875	Neville & Carmen Willows	40//6						1//			2KB
ES10	26	2291	Liz van Wijk	96//							2//		2KK
ES11	38	2211	Greg Brown	4//	6//			2//	1//			1//	
Total	2264			582	171	313	56	94	50	28	322	1798	20BI,1BS,10R,9KB,47KK,73NBK,66UK,1WBK
Birds/100 km				25.7	7.6	13.8	2.5	4.2	2.2	1.2	14.2	79.4	

EB - Border precinct, EE - Northeast Cape precinct, EG - Grahamstown precinct, EH - Humansdorp precinct, EK - Kenton precinct

EM - Middelburg precinct, EP - PE precinct (Aberdeen & Steytenville districts), ES - Somerset East precinct

Mpumalanga

A reminder to count *Helmeted Guineafowl (HG)* on these routes, and also *Oribi*, while scanning for *CAR* birds.

Steenkampsberg precinct

David Gaynor reported that “all nine routes were counted, but the summer rains again played havoc with the road conditions and MS04 and MS08 had to abort after 15.4 and 26.8 km respectively.” MS06 recorded a phenomenal eight species, including 55 Southern Bald Ibis, six Denham’s Bustards and 39 White Storks. White Storks (84) were the most prolific bird in the precinct, more than twice the average count over the 12 summer counts. The long grass did make counting difficult and only teams with 4×4 vehicles completed their routes. As David wrote

“once again, the dedication and perseverance of the ‘Steenkampsbergers’, both permanent and visitors, continues to amaze.”

A huge thank you to David and Helen who have coordinated this precinct most efficiently for 10 years now and feel it is time to step down. I have so appreciated the way in which they have maintained your enthusiasm in an area that has fewer birds and their timely, concise reports. There are three routes that are now too busy for safety (MS01, 02 and 13) so for the winter count we will leave these out. I am hoping that it will be possible to continue this precinct with some re-structuring of routes, but will be in touch after assessing summarised results that Sally has produced.

Do fill in activity and location (i.e., the last two columns) for Southern Bald Ibis, as well as for cranes and bustards.

Number of birds counted in January 2009 census in Mpumalanga												
Route	Km	ADU No.	Observers	BC	BHH	BI	CC	HG	SG	UK	WS	Other species
MC01	73.4	1377, 1369	Koos van Dyk & Lester Niss	4//				6//	3/1/			1SEC
MC02	63.3	2197, 1388	Mike Witcomb & Janice Isom	6//	45/12/			3//	12//			
MC03	57	1985, 2094	Lauraine Leigh & Bev Carstens	8//	20/17/			7//	14/22/		45//	
MC04	68.9	1368	Ralph Wordon	13/3/	21//	38//		6//	13//		14//	
MC05	68.8	1511, 1750	Barbi & Alan Forsyth	6//	6//	3//	10//	35/8/			117//	
MM01	54.8	2290	Bill Smith	7//				20/3/	66//			
MS01	51.3	726, 725	David & Helen Gaynor	2//				2//			5//	
MS02	56.7	2282	Kobus Davel	4//				7//	9//			
MS04	15.4	2096, 2097	Trevor & Sharon Schaefer	1//							6/2/	
MS05	54.8	732	Hein Geldenhuys	3//	5//	2//		4//			15//	1AS
MS06	61.9	1178	Hendrik van Wyk	2//	6/2/	55//		4//			39//	6DB, 1SEC, 2WBK
MS07	56	2328	Erwin Leibnitz					1//				
MS08	26.8	2279	Ursula Franke	2//							17//	
MS09	54.3	1727	Jim Mcluskie		2/1/		2//	16//	3//			
MS13	57	724	Lientjie Cohen			10//		15/3/				
MT01	85	1816	Colin Williams	4//				24/1/	3/5/		2//	
MT03	34.5	1986, 2093	Dries & Bonita Schoeman					12//	5/6/		15//	3NBK, 2SS
MT04	36.9	1986, 2093	Dries & Bonita Schoeman					19//	1/2/			
MT05	67	2294	Johan van Rensburg	4//	100//			29//	3//			3NBK, 5SS
MW01	57	2018, 2017	Beverley Thome & N Dennett		9/1/	12/5/			6//		19//	2WC
MW03	67	2199, 2162	Penny Fox & Dee Milstein	41//	7//		19//	2//	9/3/		97//	2DB
MW06	55.6	2196, 2163	Bronwen & Keith Davidson	2//	5//		12//		19/8/		97//	1NBK, 7SEC
MW07	65	2017, 550	Norman Dennett & Brian Guerin	3//	2//	2//	13//	12/2/	5//	47//		
MW08	88.6	361, 2003	Judy-Lynn Wheeler & Ann Cleal	1//	11//	35/1/	4//	2//	2/1/	1//	455//	1DB, 2NBK, 3SEC
MW09	82.3	1867, 2162	John Mcallister & Dee Milstein			37//	3//	2//	9//		191//	
MW10	54	2003	Ann Cleal	2//	9/2/	1//	2//	36/3/	9/3/	1//	210//	2SEC
Total	1513			50	124	384	87	242	302	7	1393	1AS, 9DB, 9NBK, 7SS, 14SEC, 2WBK, 2WC
Birds/100 km				3.3	8.2	25.4	5.7	16.0	20.0	0.5	92.1	

Middelburg precinct

I am thankful Billy Smith is still monitoring this area despite the mining activity.

Standerton precinct

Hundred Southern Bald Ibis were counted on the new route MT05. Fewer Swainson’s Spurfowl were recorded than usual in this precinct.

Wakkerstroom precinct

Judy-Lynn Wheeler wrote: “A great count with good weather. Large numbers of White Stork seen this year.” An Ngogo farmer that Judy met had hundreds of White Storks on his farm and entomologists did a survey for locusts that the White Storks were feeding on. Judy thought this could explain the high number of storks in the Lüneburg area as she found fat hoppers. Seven Secretarybirds were seen on MW06.

Chrissiesmeer precinct

The Wits Bird Club volunteers again had a most successful weekend away achieving their third highest count on these routes. Fortunately Saturday dawned clear and five routes were counted without any muddy mishaps after much rain prior to the count. White Storks outnumbered all other species.

Please continue to count Helmeted Guineafowl (HG) in this precinct.

Gauteng

Number of birds counted in January 2009 census in Gauteng												
Route	Km	ADU No.	Observers	BHH	HG	NBK	SG	Other				
GB01	20.5	931, 2183	Francois & Marianne Wolfaardt	2/9/	17//2			1//	5BI			
GB02	22	931, 2183	Francois & Marianne Wolfaardt									
GB03	52	2135	Peter Huggins	2//	31/10/	4//	1//	3WS				
GB04	44.2	1814	Billy Malatji & Ramogale Sekwele		16//							
GB05	19.7	2286, 614, 2372	Lourens Muller, R Geyser & J West	4//	3//			2WBK				
GB06	46	2257, 2340	Liesl & Theo Mostert	1//	14//			5//				
GB07	54	1764	Sean West					1//	3AS, 4WS			
GC01	19	2046	Willem de Lange		16//	34//						
GC02	64.5	613	Craig Whittington-Jones	38//	19//3	10//		139WS, 1YS				
GC03	82	2046	Willem de Lange		10//	33//		6WS				
GC04	74.7	613, 2288	Craig & Lynn Whittington-Jones	1//	1//	8/2/	2//	2SEC, 53WS				
GC05	63.1	1651, 1652	John & Moira Randell	1//	42//11	11//	5//					
GD01	66	2323	Craig Symes	10//	2//	2//		5SEC, 1UK				
GD02	53	2166	Neville Cornish	1//	6//		2//	3YS				
GD03	32	2145	Diane Rose	5/2/	12//			1SEC				
GD04	52.9	2146	Frans Rossouw	2//	8//			1//				
GH01	54.6	2045	Rouxdene Deyssel	5//	12//	1//	1//					
GH02	71.8	2226	Daniel Koen	1//	13//		1//					
GH03	51	2101	Hein Pienaar		6//	8//						
GH04	48	2338	Phuti Matlamera	3//	5//							
GH05	56	2300, 2370	Obeid Katumba & H Tshisikule	1//		2//						
GM01	44	2287, 2374	Nico Grobler & Leon Lötter		13/3/	1//						
GM02	22	2332	Sonja Lizemore		4//			1YS				
GW01	51.2	2099	Piet Muller		50//							
GW02	48.5	2152	Mags Pillay		16//	3//		15WS				
Total	1213				84	346	122	20	3AS, 5BI, 1UK, 220WS, 5YS, 8SEC, 2WBK			
Birds/100 km					6.9	28.5	10.1	1.6				

GB - Bronkhorstspuit, GC - Carletonville, GD - Devon, GH - Heidelberg, GM - Moloto, GW - World Heritage Site

Craig Whittington-Jones reported that “Despite (or perhaps because of) the heavy rain we have been experiencing we counted record numbers of NBK, WS, YS, BI and best summer totals for several other species. In weather that has eventually caused our international airport to be closed our dedicated band of volunteers slipped, clawed and dug their way along muddy tracks throughout the province and I commend their commitment. I am particularly grateful to all those who tried to count on the 31st and on finding their routes impassable, made a plan to return at a later date.”

Do remember to count the Helmeted Guineafowl (HG). Thank you to Craig for organising these counts.

