

SEPTEMBER 2014

Spring has arrived. Although we are still experiencing some winter weather spring is in the air with new blossoms and returning migrants to look out for. Visit our facebook page, come and see what other members have been up to, share your sightings, identification queries and photos with us. www.facebook.com/birdlifepolokwane. If you happen to come across anything you would like to see in our next newsletter, or you would like to give feedback you can e-mail me at chantz66@gmail.com. *Happy birding.*

Chantelle

Uitstappie na Schoemansdal - Saterdag 29/8/2014

deur Sandrie de Wet

Richter en Mercia jaag ons BAIE vroeg op en met vier karre ry ons vyf-uur reeds uit Polokwane, om so half-sewe by Schoemansdal aan te kom. Daargekom wag 'n hele klomp Kuifkoptarentale ons in en so half ongeskik spring ons uit met ons kameras en vergeet amper om vir Dalene en Danie (ons nuwe lede) te groet van skone opgewondenheid oor die tarentale wat so uitsonderlik mak is. Tussen die lang lense van Jody en Dalene en die mik-en-drukke van Almarie en ons ander, neem ons 'n dik album vol fotos maar omdat hulle net nie wil stil staan nie, is die meeste uit fokus! Wat 'n lekker ondervinding om te sien hoe die tarentale uit Johan (ons een gasheer) se hand eet!

Na 'n lekker koppie koffie van ons vriendelike gasheer loop ons die tuine plat en sien/hoor ons sowat 55 verkillende spesies. Ongelukkig ontduik die Konkoit weereens vir Jody, Saartjie, Annemarie en Willie, al hoor ons hom die hele tyd "net hier anderkant die bos". Willie stap die berg amper tot bo, maar wat wou... al wat hy hoor is 'n Bosloerie. Conrad hoor TWEE Rooikophoutkappers, en so kuier-kuier sien en hoor ons onder andere die Waaiertertvlieëvanger, Groenvlekduifie, Donkervlieëvanger, Kaapse Bosbontrokkie, Bloukuifvlieëvanger, Bloukuifloerie en die Blou Katakoeroe.

Die wat nie té moeg en té oud was nie, stap toe na die watervalletjie en daar sien Richter nog die Gestreepte Koester en ek neem 'n Konkoit af met die hulp van Gershwin en Google.

Schoemansdal se gronde is baie mooi versorg en skoon, die mense is vriendelik, gaaf en behulpsaam. Hierdie plek sal ons definitief weer sien...

Visuël poging – Club Ranch Safaris

deur Richter van Tonder

Ons was weer vroeg uit die vere Sondagoggend 31 Augustus om een van die groot 6 (in voël terme) te sien. Vir sommige is dié voël slegs 'n miete en vir ander 'n besondere spesie wat lank onthou sal word nl. die Visuël. Ons was 9 opgewonde voëlkykers wat die pragtige uil die dag gaan soek het. Richter, Marcia, Gershwin, Conrad, Geoff en dan ons gaste van Birdlife SA en Witsvoëlklub: Hanneline, Linda, Lance en Andy.



Dis altyd 'n wonderlike ervaring om in die Limpopovallei te gaan voël kyk. En ons het natuurlik weer besondere spesies gesien en gehoor. Ons was net na 7:30 daar en het ook sommer die gebied ge-atlas vir wetenskaplike navorsing.

Met aankoms het 'n trop beeste ons gegroet met tientalle Rooibekrenostervoëls op hulle. Ons het toe nie verder tyd gemors nie en was na 'n vinnige koppie koffie in die Limpoporivier na die bekende eiland waar ons miete vir ons wag... Daar was nog so bietjie water in die rivier en ons moes eers ons skoene uittrek om deur te stap. Daarna was ons op die eiland en het die soektog begin. Ons kry toe 'n paar van die uil se vere rondlê en ons voel dat ons hom enige oomblik gaan sien... Maar te vergeefs en vir sommige van ons in die groep word die uil se reputasie as miete net groter. Darem was daar natuurlik heelwat ander spesie wat ons laat goed voel het om te kon sien soos: Witkopkiewiet, Bosveldpapegaaï (lifer vir sommige), Tropiese Waterfiskaal, Bromvoël en Gompoue wat altyd mooi is om te sien buite die reserwate, Kortbeksuikerbekkie, Geelvlekmosie Grootheuningwyser, Waaiertertvlieëvanger en die Blougrysvlieëvanger om maar 'n paar te noem. Saam het ons naby die 100 spesies gesien vir die Club Ranch Area.

Dankie aan almal wat daar was en volgende keer probeer ons weer!



Foto deur Sandrie de Wet

Southern Limpopo Province Atlas Bash – 13 – 15 August 2014.

by Joe Grosel

The Limpopo Bird Guides under the guidance of Joe Grosel undertook another challenging atlassing session in the southern reaches of the Limpopo Province. The target area is situated in the largely rural but fairly remote south-western Sekhukhune district which lies east of Marble Hall and west of the Jane Furse settlement. Several coordinated atlassing sessions earlier in 2014 greatly reduced a large 'un-atlassed' gap in this region however at least 16 'virgin' and isolated pentads remained. The Greater Limpopo Birding Routes committee consequently decided to tackle these pentads with the help of some of its members and several established and trainee guides.

Lisa Martus of the GLBR secured a generous offer from the manager of the Sabella Private Retreat <http://www.sabella.co.za> Mr. Gerrit Booyens to host the atlassing team. Sabella is a stylish new lodge located in the hills north of Marble Hall overlooking the vast 'Springbok Flats'. The lodge is situated in attractive bushveld woodland and as the name implies each suite is privately positioned under a canopy of large Marula trees.

The modis operandi for the atlassing assignment involved systematically placing groups of bird guides in the target pentads which were covered on foot allowing two teams in vehicles to reach and cover more isolated pentads. This allowed the atlassing team to cover three different pentads at the same time for a minimum of two hours in order to complete full protocol observations. The habitats covered were diverse for such a relatively small area and included sandy bushveld, granite outcrops, Sekhukhune mountain bushveld, Turf thornveld and Highveld grassland. Subsequently a large diversity of bird species was recorded. Interesting species seen in the shrubby grasslands within the southern confines of the province were Cloud and Tinkling Cisticola, Pink-billed and Spike-heeled Larks and Pearl-breasted Swallow. Typical arid thornveld species such as Ashy Tit, Southern Pied Babbler, Crimson-breasted Shrike and Kalahari Scrub-Robin were recorded on the Springbok Flats while most of the bushveld representatives including varieties of Bee-eaters, Hornbills, Weavers, Barbets and Starlings were listed in the wooded areas to the north-west of the atlassed region. Several species of conservation concern such as Barrow's Korhaan, Secretary Bird, Cape Vulture and Lanner Falcon were also recorded in some of the pentads.

A total of 16 pentads were atlassed of which 15 were previously 'un-atlassed'. The average number of species recorded per pentad was 58 with the highest in a single pentad being 115 in the 'Sabella pentad'. A rather significant combined total of 211 species were recorded in all sixteen pentads.

With the completion of this atlassing bash one of the largest 'coverage gaps' in the Limpopo Province was firmly shut and also pushed the coverage percentage for the Limpopo Province to beyond the 85% mark.

Thanks must go to: Mr Charles Hardy and David Letsoalo for providing valuable assistance in the form of transport and shuttling observers between the pentads; to our generous hosts Gerrit and Cecile Booyens and the Sabella team for spoiling us during our stay; to the Limpopo birding guides David Letsoalo, Paul Nkhumane, Samson Mulaudzi and trainee guides Lucas Lekoto and Joseph Moema for their enthusiastic participation and to Lisa Martus for engaging the bird guides and for securing and administrating the sponsorship and accommodation for the event. Lastly our sincere gratitude goes to BirdLife South Africa for the kind sponsorship that made this atlassing event possible.



The atlassing team Back - Joseph Moema, David Letsoalo, Joe Grosel, Lucas Lekoto & Charles Hardy. Front - Paul Nkhumane & Samson Mulaudzi

Barn Swallow Chicks

by Susan Chapman

I photographed these chicks in Llandiloes Wales a few weeks ago on 12th August. The owner of the home told me that the parents leave their young and set off on their migration without their young. Well these three little ones fledged the nest one week later. I was also told that they too will begin their migration to Africa within a month.

We wish them travel mercies!



Outings / Uitstappies

19 Sep – 'Movie Night' (LG & S3)

20 Sep – Visit to the Crown Bird Rehabilitation Centre (LG)

02 – 05 Oct – Raptor Identification Course in the KNP with the Limpopo Honorary Rangers (CH)

29 Nov - Birding Big Day

Contact Persons

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