

Cape Parrot Newsletter

Number 7 - April 2008

Contents:

<i>Contents:</i>	1	<i>Voluntary Co-ordinator Position: CPWG</i>	4
<i>Request for Articles for the Newsletter</i>	1	<i>BirdLife South Africa: Adopt a Parrot</i>	5
<i>Snowstorm Pair Chicks - William Horsfield</i>	1	<i>Cape Parrot Big Birding Day 2008 Co-ordinators</i> .	5
<i>Where to see Cape Parrots - Southern KZN</i>		<i>BirdLife South Africa: Birders Code of Ethics</i> ...	7
<i>Birding Route</i>	2	<i>Web Sites of Interest:</i>	7
<i>The Marutswa Forest Trail & Boardwalk</i>	3		
<i>Parrots as Food - Tee</i>	4		

A Word from the Editor

Hi Everyone

I am currently enjoying a 3 month visit to Cape Town, it is the first time I have spent any time here other than a couple of short holidays. I am continuing to work whilst here (and so not seeing as much of this area as I would like to) but do have a lovely view from my desk looking across Rondebosch and up to Table mountain.

I travel back to KZN at the end of this month.

Tee

Request for Articles for the Newsletter

As always I am on the lookout for articles for the Cape Parrot Newsletter. Please do consider sending me something. I know a lot

of you will be involved in the Cape Parrot Count or have other interests with the Cape Parrot. I'm sure readers would love to hear.

Contact Details:

Tee Taylor

Email: taylorl@ukzn.ac.za

Snowstorm Pair Chicks - William Horsfield

The Snowstorm pair with their 3 recently fledged chicks in their aviary.

From left to right:

Parents (male, female) and their 3 juvenile female offspring.

Photo: William Horsfield



Recent newsletters have reported the successful breeding of the "Snowstorm pair". These birds were confiscated after being illegally removed from the wild, and were eventually placed at the Amazona Endangered Parrot Breeding Facility to join the captive breeding programme. William reports: The pair did a fantastic job hatching all 3 eggs and raising the youngsters without a glitch. The feather perfect youngsters were surgically sexed and have turned out to be 3 females which is great news as we have a surplus of male birds in the captive breeding programme. We are hoping to pair up one of these females with Vicky's chick should it turn out to be male.

Contact Details: W.A Horsfield, Email: amazona@iafrica.com Web site: www.amazona.co.za

Where to see Cape Parrots - Southern KZN Birding Route

If you want to view Cape Parrots in the wild the best way is to use a trained registered guide or visit a recognised site. This will firstly increase your chances of seeing a Cape Parrot but also assist in protecting the species and environment. The Southern KZN Birding Route includes several sites where sightings of the Cape Parrot are regularly made and links to experienced guides.

The Marutswa Forest Boardwalk. (Site 6.1) (see also a bit more about this site elsewhere in the newsletter) Sightings recently described in a report on Sabirdnet. "There is a lovely forest walk with parrots a bit closer to Underberg. We saw a Cape parrot from the car park at Marutswa Forest, Bulwer on Sunday. We arrived late - at about 7am, and one flew over. Simphiwe (072 356-5600) a recently-trained bird guide working at the forest says they are there early each morning. Get there earlier than we did. We were lucky with a late-departing one flying over. Just past the reserve buildings there are a few ring-barked gum trees where they hang out early each morning."

Karkloof Conservation Centre. (Site 3.1 - inserted picture is of the Crowned Crane hide at the centre) There have been numerous Cape Parrot sightings listed at the

"The Southern KZN Birding Route includes several sites where sightings of the Cape Parrot are regularly made..."

Centre in recent weeks. Most of these sightings have taken place in the hillsides that surround the Conservation Centre.

Other sites suggested by the Southern KZN Birding Route that produce regular Cape Parrot sightings include:

Benvie Farm (Site 3.3) where they fly to Mbona forest (privately owned).

Boston View Farm (Site 5.1).

Another report on Sabirdnet. "If you want to make a short detour on the way to Underberg you are virtually assured of seeing Cape Parrots at Boston. The stoep at Bev Geldart's B&B cottage overlooks a stand of yellowwood trees where the parrots hang out at dawn or

dusk.

There are also Cape Parrot in the Mist-belt Forest around Balgowan. For example Terlings Farm (Site 2.3) Walter Addison will hopefully be participating in the Cape parrot count on 3rd & 4th May in this area.

My thanks to Matthew Drew, Project Manager of the SKZN Birding Route who has provided this information.

Contact Details:

Matthew Drew

Email: skzn@birdlife.org.za

Cell: 082-325-3514

Web Site: www.kznbirding.co.za



Karkloof Conservation Centre

Contact: Caryn Hampson

Tel: 033-330-2992

Email: karkloofcentre@telkomsa.net

Marutswa Forest Boardwalk

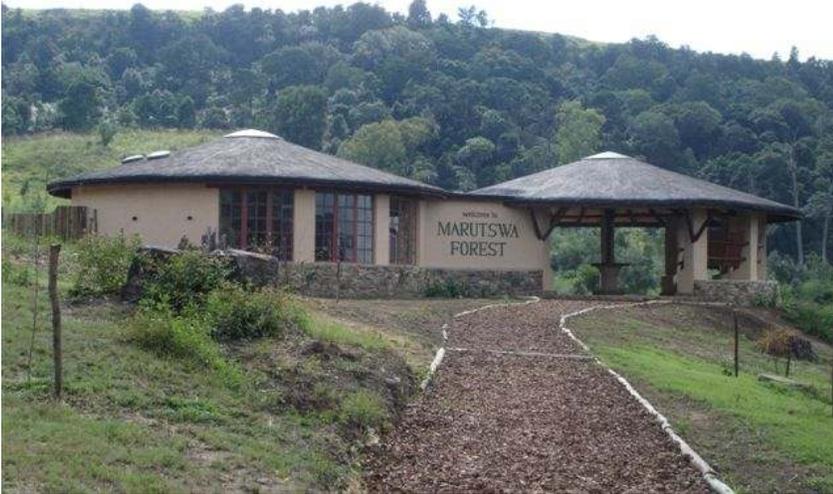
Contact: Lee Comrie

Cell: 082-552-2517

The SappiWWF TreeRoutes Partnership are the proud sponsors of the Southern KZN Birding Route, Marutswa Forest Boardwalk and the Karkloof Conservation Centre.



The Marutswa Forest Trail & Boardwalk



The Cape Parrot is a symbol of Marutswa historically they were known as "Bulwer Parrots".

The Marutswa Forest Trail & Boardwalk can be found near to the village of Bulwer (about 90 mins from Pietermaritzburg). It forms a joint initiative between the Bulwer Biosphere and the SappiWWF TreeRoutes Partnership.

The project was initiated by the Bulwer Biosphere to help rehabilitate and ensure the preservation of the 3000ha of Scarp forest and to protect its endemic flora and fauna. The eco-tourism venture will also create jobs for the local community and provide guided walks through the forest.

The Sappi WWF TreeRoutes partnership has funded the development of a forest walk and interpretive centre to the amount of R1.1 million.

The Wildlands Conservation Trust is facilitating the implementation of the project which includes:

- construction of the forest walk
- a wheelchair friendly forest trail
- a raised boardwalk (up to 12m)
- viewing decks & observation jetties including a 6.5m observation tower
- interpretation facilities
- picnic spots

Plus there will also be:

- a refreshment kiosk
- an arts and crafts gallery
- an indigenous nursery

These facilities are currently under development and it is hoped that they will be complete by June 2008 (so make a date in your diaries).



You can read more about the project at:

www.kznbirding.co.za/projects.htm including a downloadable PDF sketch of the site plan. (comment from Tee: having a personal interest in 'loo's with a view' I think I must check out the long drop!)

The wider aims of the project are to conserve and rehabilitate the 3000 ha Marutswa Forest which

had been degraded following harsh logging in the 1880's. The Marutswa Forest is one of few intact Scarp forests that is easily accessible in KwaZulu-Natal. This mistbelt forest is one of South Africa's most threatened and poorly conserved forest types.

The Cape Parrot is a symbol of Marutswa historically they were known as "Bulwer Parrots"

The Bulwer Biosphere committee will manage the trail, as well as train local community members as guides for the trail. In addition to the Cape Parrot the forest is home to a rich variety of birdlife, all three species of Yellowwood can be found in the forest plus vines estimated at over 1000 years old. It is also home to the dwarf chameleon - endemic to Scarp Forests in KZN.

So make a date in your diary to check out the Marutswa Forest Trail and Boardwalk later this year.

Contact Details:

The boardwalk is due for completion in June. Keep an eye on the web site, for updates, to make sure the Boardwalk has been completed before your visit.

Web Sites: www.kznbirding.co.za

www.treeroutes.co.za/

Contact: Lee Comrie

Cell: 082-552-2517



Parrots as Food - Tee

I am currently doing a bit of a literature search looking at a number of different aspects with regard to man's use of Parrots.

Whilst us researchers are usually only interested in 'positive' finds - on this occasion I am pleased to report a negative result for the Cape Parrot. So far I have not found any references to the Cape Parrot being hunted for its meat or feathers, and only found a single anecdotal report of the Cape Parrot being used in traditional medicines. When I followed this up with people working locally in that subject area

and they are not aware of a problem with the Cape Parrot in the 'muthi' trade. If it does occur it is likely only at a rare and opportunistic level as opposed to organised.

"I have found no reference to Cape Parrots being hunted for its meat or feathers..."

Unless of course anyone out there can tell me otherwise!

It is likely that if anything any interest in such uses might be

outcompeted by the profit related to the captive trade for pets / aviculture.

I will also be looking at the use of parrots worldwide for their feathers, traditional medicines and of course in the captive trade. I am hoping to undertake a survey of people working worldwide in areas where parrots are utilised in one of these ways later this year.

Contact Details: Tee Taylor

Email: taylorlort@ukzn.ac.za

Voluntary Co-ordinator Position: CPWG

Position Details:

The CPWG is currently without a co-ordinator and is urgently seeking a dynamic self-motivated volunteer.

Due to the diverse range of interests, wide dispersal and voluntary nature of all the stakeholders' communication and maintaining contact between all involved is limited without a co-ordinator. The role of the co-ordinator is essential in the successful co-ordination of stakeholders.

The CPWG has historically relied upon a full time co-ordinator and facilitator to ensure the relevant parties are aware of important issues and events, to encourage and assist members implement the aims of the CPWG. The CPWG co-ordinator also plays an important position in providing public awareness and education to local communities and the public in protecting the Cape Parrot. The Cape Parrot is well recognised in South Africa and can also provide a flagship species to assist the wider ecological communities in the afro-montane forests.

Ideally the CPWG is looking for someone with some experience in this type of role who is able to offer a commitment of at least 6 months preferably a year.

The responsibilities of the CPWG Co-ordinator would include:

- Develop and maintain the infrastructure for the CPWG
- Liaise, and maintain interactions and the regular dissemination of information, with and between all stakeholders of the CPWG
- Provide information and liaise with the general public about Cape Parrots
- Run awareness and education workshops (schools, local communities local industry e.g. forestry), especially in areas where Cape Parrots occur and human activities impact on the CP
- Perform administrative tasks such as: report writing, maintaining financial records
- To encourage and assist stakeholders where possible to find the means to implement activities within the action plan
- Fundraise to maintain the co-ordinator position into the future (incl. salary, travel, administration expenses etc.)
- Respond to crises (e.g. illegal trade information), contacting the relevant parties
- Collaborate with other Working Groups and attend relevant meetings

The position will be based at the University of KwaZulu-Natal in Pietermaritzburg, South Africa where admin facilities will be available. Unfortunately at this stage the position is without funding support. The successful applicant will be encouraged to seek funding.

If you are interested in this position please send a letter of motivation, including why you think you are suitable for this role, and a current CV by email to: CapeParrot@ukzn.ac.za with the words "CPWG Co-ordinator" in the subject line.

Further Information: Web site: www.cpwg.unp.ac.za or contact Colleen Downs: Email: downs@ukzn.ac.za

BirdLife South Africa: Adopt a Parrot

BirdLife South Africa, in addition to undertaking their own initiatives in developing projects to conserve the Cape Parrot, is also an active member of the Cape Parrot Working Group.

As one of their initiatives towards this they have been running an "Adopt a Parrot" funding appeal

through their web site. The appeal is aimed funding projects that meet the joint aims of BirdLife SA and the CPWG towards the conservation of the Cape Parrot in the wild.

For more details see:

www.birdlife.org.za/adoptaparrot/



Cape Parrot Big Birding Day 2008 Co-ordinators

The annual cape Parrot Big Birding Day takes place on the weekend of the 3rd & 4th May in 2008, the count takes place on Saturday evening and Sunday morning.

So if you are interested in volunteering you need to make sure

you don't get booked up for anything else up on that weekend!

Below is a list of the contact people who will be co-ordinating the different regions for 2008. Please get in contact the person in the region you wish to be placed in (or contact Colleen: see next page).

On the next page is a copy of the flyer for the event - feel free to print it off and distribute it to publicise the event to people who may be interested.

As usual the overall co-ordinator is Colleen Downs whose contact details are on the flyer.

Contact persons for the Cape Parrot Big Birding Day 2008

Area	Name	Tel	Email
Overall co-ordinator	Prof. Colleen Downs	033 260 5127; 0829202026	downs@ukzn.ac.za
Newcastle (Ncandu)	Tony Roberts	034 2125585 082 8217779	trtours@dundee.kzn.co.za
Karkloof	John & Jenny Robinson	033-5029090/ 082-4433805	tomrob@mweb.co.za
Dangle/ Nottingham Rd/ Balgowan	Adam Robinson	033 2344484 0726146081	adamjnr@mweb.co.za
Byrne Valley	Malcolm Anderson	033 2122744 082 5723455	mmanderson@mweb.co.za
Boston	Barbara & Glyn Bullock	033 997 1783	
Bulwer	Russell Hill	039 8320053 082 9239649	carolhill@futurenet.co.za
Creighton/Donnybrook	Malcolm Gemmell	039 8331029 082 7895000	buttonbirding@futurenet.co.za
Weza/ Glengarry	Colleen Downs	See above	
Mpur/Glengarry	Louis Marx	039 6821468	jeanmarx@telkomsa.net
Kokstad	Pat Lowry	039 7273844	lowry@kznwildlife.com
Mthatha Langeni / Mawane Ngcobo	Gary Harvey	0834520883, 0436422791h, 0406350283w	starsec@mweb.co.za
Hogsback	Jane Pledger		janepledger@ananzi.co.za
Stutterheim	Neill Harvey	043-6832384	alliedin@eci.co.za
Wild Coast (Port St Johns)	Kathryn Costello	047 5641240	outspan@wildcoast.co.za
Mbotyi	John Duff	083 657 8764	heatherj@futurenet.co.za
KWT/Alice	Gertie Griffith	043 7352195	gerken@intekom.com
	Peter Mather-Pike	043 7403566 /0829248514	petcher@xsinet.co.za
Northern Province	David Letsoala	083 568 4678 015 2762704	info@krm.co.za
	Cathy Dzerefos	083 7462239 015 2765003	cathy@dzerefos.com
	Kobus Pienaar	082 809 8875	pienaarAJ@ledet.gov.za
	Coenraad van Zyl	082 801 0014	Coenraadvz@TelkomSA.net

Cape Parrot Counting Day 2008



Wanted

Volunteers to
help count the
endangered
Cape Parrot in
the wild

Sat May 3rd (pm) & Sun May 4th (am)

Join us in our annual evening and morning
Cape Parrot count to help save one of
South Africa's most endangered birds

Contact: Prof Colleen T. Downs
School of Biological & Conservation Sciences,
University of KwaZulu-Natal, Pietermaritzburg
Tel: 033-2605127/04 (w), 033-3962011 (h),
0829202026 Email: downs@ukzn.ac.za



BirdLife South Africa: Birders Code of Ethics

Colleen suggested that I include a copy of BirdLife South Africa's Birder's Code of Ethics. www.birdlife.org.za

BIRDLIFE SOUTH AFRICA: BIRDER'S CODE OF ETHICS

Birders have an obligation at all times to protect wildlife, the natural environment and the rights of others. We provide leadership by adhering to guidelines of good birding behaviour.

1 Birders do not endanger the welfare of birds or other wildlife. We will:

- Observe and photograph birds without knowingly disturbing them in any significant way.
- Avoid chasing and repeatedly flushing birds
- Sparingly use recordings and similar methods of attracting birds and not in heavily birded areas or during breeding seasons.
- Keep appropriate distances from nests and nesting colonies, not disturb them or expose them to danger.
- Refrain from handling birds and eggs unless in recognised research activities.

2 Birders do not harm the natural environment. We will:

- Stay in existing roads, trails and pathways to avoid trampling or disturbing fragile habitat.
- Leave all habitats as we find them.

3 Birders respect the rights of others. We will:

- Respect the privacy and property of others by observing "No Trespassing" signs, and by asking permission to enter private or posted lands.
- Practice courtesy in our contacts with others. For example, limit requests for information, and make them at reasonable hours.
- Always behave in a manner that will enhance the image of the birding communities in the eyes of the public.

4 Birders in groups have special responsibilities. We will:

- Take special care to alleviate problems and disturbances multiplied when more people are present. Act in consideration of the group's interest, as well as our own.
- Support, by our actions, the responsibility of the group leader(s) for the conduct of the group. As group leaders we will:
 - Assume responsibility for the conduct of the group
 - Learn and inform the group of any special rules, regulations or conduct applicable to the area or habitat being visited
 - Limit groups to a size that does not threaten the environment or the peace and tranquillity of others
 - Teach others birding ethics through words and example

Web Sites of Interest:

I have included a few web sites that may be of interest (please let me know of others):

The **Cape Parrot Working Group Web Site:** www.cpwg.unp.ac.za Email: CapeParrot@ukzn.ac.za

You can view back copies of the **Cape Parrot Newsletters** at www.cpwg.unp.ac.za/CPNewsletter2.html

The Cape Parrot has featured on several **50/50 TV programmes** here are some of the links

2007: www.5050.co.za/inserts.asp?ID=8077

Feb 2002: www.5050.co.za/inserts.asp?ID=2415

2007: www.5050.co.za/inserts.asp?ID=7679

May 2002: www.5050.co.za/inserts.asp?ID=2542

2000: www.5050.co.za/inserts.asp?ID=4721

Nov 2002: www.5050.co.za/inserts.asp?ID=4594

BirdLife South Africa: www.birdlife.org.za/

World Parrot Trust: www.parrots.org

The Parrot Action Plan: www.parrots.org/index.php/ourpublication/parrotactionplan/

The EU Trade Ban Campaign: www.parrots.org/index.php/ourwork/pp_eutradeban/

Contact Details:

Tiawanna (Tee) Taylor Email: taylor@ukzn.ac.za Tel: (033) 260 6032, Department of Zoology, School of Biological and Conservation Sciences, University of KwaZulu-Natal, Private Bag X01, Scottsville 3209, KwaZulu Natal

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