

GRAAFF-REINET BIRD CLUB

NEWSLETTER



SPRING 2010

FOR MEMBERSHIP AND GENERAL ENQUIRIES PLEASE CONTACT JUDY CARYER AT 049-8910353

HISTORY OF THE GRAAFF-REINET BIRD CLUB

The Graaff-Reinet Bird Club has been in existence for about 10 years. Judy Caryer takes us back to the year 2000 :

“My mother (the late Joan Collett), had been doing the CAR (Co-ordinated Avian Road Count) for the Avian Demography Unit at the UCT Percy Fitzpatrick Institute, and so Donella Young, the Researcher-in-Charge, asked if she and Doug Harebottle, Co-ordinator of CWAC count (water birds) could come to Graaff-Reinet and address people about the work of the Avian Demography Unit. Mom and I organized a meeting at The Union and advertised it by word-of-mouth and in the Advertiser; we were pleasantly surprised when about 50 people turned up! At the tea afterward we took the opportunity of asking people if they were interested in belonging to a Bird Club and there was an enthusiastic response; so we organized another meeting, which led to the election of a Steering Committee, of which I was the Secretary and Walter Murray the Chairman. The first Annual General Meeting of the Graaff-Reinet Bird Club was held about a year later, in 2001.”

THE TWITCHING POST

STRANGE, BUT TRUE...

There were some interesting sightings ~ lifers for some ~ during this year :

- 🦅 Random sightings of African Openbilled Storks, also in the Camdeboo National Park;
- 🦅 Some Little Bee-eaters, as well as a Village Indigobird, were spotted on the farm Dalham;
- 🦅 A Yellow-bellied Eremomela caused some excitement on the farm Broederstroom;
- 🦅 Two Mute Swans, one of which has subsequently died, and some Lesser and Greater Flamingos were seen at Nqweba Dam;
- 🦅 A lone Abdim's Stork was spotted in the company of an African Sacred Ibis on a farm just north of Nieu-Bethesda...

SOUTHERN AFRICAN BIRD ATLAS PROJECT 2

Did you know that there is a national Bird Atlasing project on the go? Visit the website <http://sabab2.adu.org.za> to find out more about it. Experienced Birders who wish to attend a workshop and participate in SABAP2 are welcome to contact Judy Caryer in this regard.

ADDO BIRDING WEEKEND

Leonie Fouché attended the Sasol Birding Bonanza weekend (15 – 17 Oct. 2010), which was arranged by the Addo Honorary Rangers. It was a full programme and Birders were spoilt for choice. On Saturday the 16th Leonie participated in both the Sunday's River Ferry cruise and a night drive at the Riverbend Game Reserve, then went on the Off-the-Beaten-Track game drive / bird spotting excursion on Sunday. Both the functions on Friday and Saturday night were attended and thoroughly enjoyed. Goodie Bags were handed out upon registration on Friday afternoon, and Birders were given yummy Brunch Packs to take with on their excursions.

In between there was also a dynamic talk on raptors, with a tame Cape Eagle Owl (Jack) and Buzz the Jackal Buzzard keeping their audience enthralled. It was really well worth the money and a special word of thanks is extended to the Addo Honorary Rangers for all the effort they put into making this a very successful and enjoyable event. Some photos will be posted in the next Newsletter.

Please let us have any snippets you would like to share with others here on the Twitching Post.

NEXT OUTINGS

At our last AGM, consensus was reached that in future, the arrangements for outings will be rotated amongst Club Members. Each Outing Organizer will be responsible for :

- ✓ Identifying the venue and obtaining the necessary permission from the landowner,
- ✓ Planning the route and conducting a recce beforehand, if necessary,
- ✓ Liaising with the Birdday Co-ordinator (Walter Murray) and relaying this information timeously to the Club Secretary (Judy Caryer), who will then notify all members,
- ✓ Ensuring that braai wood and fire-lighters are transported to or available at the venue,
- ✓ Appointing additional Group Leaders, depending on the size of the group,
- ✓ Bringing with the Club's Clipboard and Bird List (to be collected from Judy Caryer),
- ✓ Chairing the mini-meeting directly after the outing and submitting a report and the completed Bird List to the Club Secretary within a week after the outing.

The next three outings are being arranged by Walter Murray, Tim Hobson & Jerry Rose-Innes respectively. The provisional programme looks like this :

Saturday, 11 th December 2010	Tim Hobson	Tel. 049-8910412
Saturday, 12 th February 2011	Walter Murray	Tel. 049-8923234
Saturday, 12 th March 2011	Jerry Rose-Innes	Tel. 049-8910255

Our outings are scheduled for the 2nd Saturday of each month and the meeting place is always in front of the Department of Agriculture / Environmental Affairs Building in Bourke Street, Graaff-Reinet ~ unless otherwise informed. Details of each outing will be confirmed about two weeks in advance. Time of departure varies according to the season, but we do try to hit the road by 6am in the summer and 7am in the winter. Bring along a breakfast snack (to be enjoyed on the trot), something for the braai after the outing, braai-grid and a chair. Don't forget your binoculars, field guide, hat, sunblock and H₂O! Comfortable, yet sturdy, walking shoes are a must.

SPECIAL EVENTS

Interesting Birding workshops and excursions take place from time-to-time and members will be kept informed about them. Please support these events. Some forthcoming attractions are :

- 5 – 7 November 2010
Camdeboo National Park Birding Weekend ~ being arranged with the assistance of the Addo Honorary Rangers. Contact Rudi Schönfeldt on 082 600 7810 or e-mail gordon@manuys.co.za for more information.
- 19 – 20 November 2010
LBJ / Bird Identification Course with David Allen at Newton Park Library (PE), with special focus on Pipits, Larks & Cisticolas. This course includes two field outings, of which one (on Sunday 21 Nov.) is optional. Only R60.00 per person! Contact Corné Erasmus on 084 515 8425 or e-mail corne.erasmus@axess.co.za for more information.
- January 2011
SABAP2 Workshop (theory and practical) on Bird Atlasing. More details will be provided in due course.

GRAAFF-REINET BIRD CLUB CONTACTS

PORTFOLIO	MEMBER	TEL. / CELL.	E-MAIL ADDRESS
Birdday Co-ordinator	Walter Murray	049-8923234	waltermurray@wam.co.za
Vice Birdday Co-ordinator	Jerry Rose-Innes	049-8910255	jerry.roseinnes@gmail.com
Secretary & Treasurer	Judy Caryer	049-8910353	caryer@isat.co.za
Marketing & Promotion	Leonie Fouché	082 7077 403	fouchel@camdeboo.gov.za

A FRIENDLY REMINDER...

To those members who have not yet renewed their annual subs. For only R30.00 you can participate in one of the fastest-growing recreational hobbies in the world; go on a monthly outing and receive a quarterly Newsletter! We are in the process of updating our Members' List and regret to advise that non-paying members will be removed from our database.

Please let us have your interesting stories and events for inclusion in our next Newsletter.

