

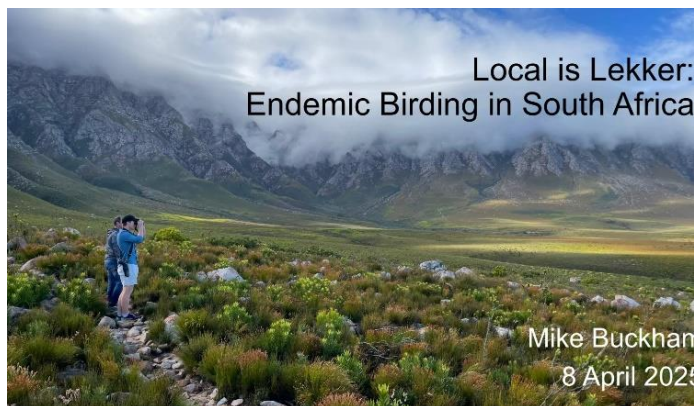


BLING WINGS

Brown-crowned Tchagra [Marna Buys]

Edition 20, April 2025

Reflections: Club meeting 8 April 2025



“Endemic birding in South Africa” by Mike Buckham was a great success, we learnt a lot about our true endemics, and the video was made available to all club members afterward. One more advantage to belonging to BLNG!

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MAGALIES MBT – 12 April

Vriende van Magalies NR was registered in 2005, affiliated with WESSA and the entire 500 ha area between Steve Biko Road and 32nd Ave was fenced. The Magaliesberg range was recognised in 2015 by UNESCO as an important biosphere. And, though this biosphere boasts an impressive 430+ bird species, we had to be satisfied with barely more than 10% of that number. It was a cool, cloudy morning, perfect for hiking, but not conducive for birdwatching. Several new members were shown where the specials could be found in season. Little Sparrowhawk and the first Fairy Flycatcher of the season saved the day – also an escapee Purple-crested Turaco, the first species seen, and African Olive Pigeon on the exit road reminded us of the magic of every bird walk.



African Olive Pigeon – Geelbekbosduif
[Marna Buys]



Right: Grassland Wood Orchid (*Bonatea speciosa*) pointed out to us by Tjeerd de Wit, who documents the fauna and flora of this area with his macro photography – see Vriende van Magalies FB page.

MODDERFONTEIN – 16 April

Pat Ayling guided our BLNG group for a first excursion in this private reserve which includes portions of the Modderfontein Spruit, some dams, grassland, and hills.



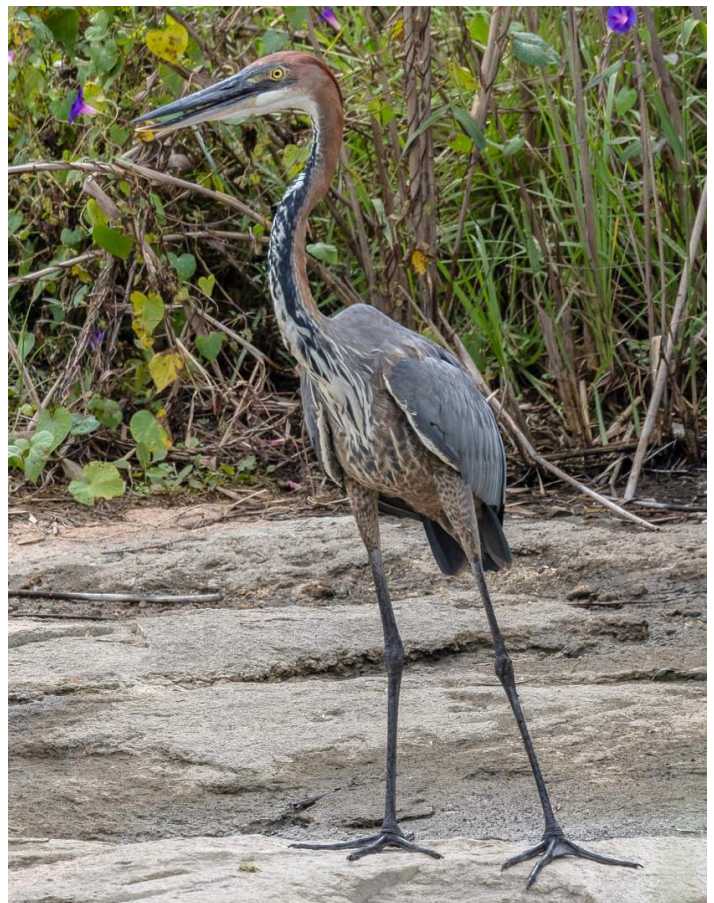
Long-crested Eagle [Hannes van den Berg]



[Johan Croucamp]



Law-abiding Malachite Kingfisher
[Johan Croucamp]



Goliath Heron [Hannes van den Berg]

WILGE RIVER VALLEY – 26 April

Keanu Canto, the outing leader, had a very unexpectedly adventurous day ahead as leader of the group – should they attempt to cross the swollen Wilge River in flood, as never seen before, or not? The group members had an astonishing seventeen lifers between them, with exciting finds such as Yellow-bellied Greenbul, Grey Tit-flycatcher, Brubru, African Firefinch and Bearded Woodpecker. Not to mention the memories of their exciting escapades of muddy crossings earlier on!



Hero of the day, testing the waters -too unsafe to cross [Jenna van Schoor]



Yellow-fronted Canary [Michael Erasmus]



[Keanu Canto]



Zitting Cisticola [Michael Erasmus]



Black-headed Oriole [Gerdus Heydenrych]



A happy Chris Steyn who recorded 12 lifers. [Wouter Fourie]



Brown Snake Eagle [Rulien Erasmus]

REGIONAL AND LOCAL RARITIES AND INTERESTING SIGHTINGS

With migrants having departed, and a dismally wet and cold April which caused flooded and impassable roads, reports of special sightings all but dried up.

A single **Cape Vulture** was seen in Cheltondale in Johannesburg. Ard van de Wetering reported a **Black Stork** on Crake Road. The Trichardtspoort road had a flock of eight **Swallow-tailed Bee-eaters**, reported by Hanjo Gouws.

Selwyn Rautenbach found a **Martial Eagle** on the dirt road next to Mabusa NR.

BLNG members saw a **Yellow-bellied Greenbul** at Wilge River Valley, with a **Grey Tit-flycatcher** another notable sighting.



Cape Vulture [Brad Merwitz]

All these sightings were reported on various social media forums. Some records were sourced from eBird or Sabap2 records.

Photograph of the month

This photograph is all about contrasts in colours and textures. The orange bill and facial skin, as well as the flower heads, are the exact complements of the purple-blue feathers of this Reed Cormorant. The beautiful, smooth, glossy primary feathers contrast with the dull black fur of the neck and head. The strong, glossy diagonal lines of the wing and tail feathers contrast with the twisted, rough whorls of the stump. The crisp delineated bursts of spiky flowers in front contrast with the soft, blurred background, while the bright orange and green colours of the flowers in front are echoed in the hazy background tints. The orange of the flowers accentuates the cormorant's orange facial areas. Well done, Gerdus Heydenrych!



BLNG Club meeting – 13 MAY

Flock to Marion again!! It surely rates as THE birding event of 2025. Come and join us at the BLNG Flockers reunion, to enjoy their photographs, and report back.

The Photography Club will meet at 18:00 to view and discuss the very best Flock seabird photographs taken by our own BLNG members.



Celebrating success!!

No legal win in birding circles has ever been celebrated with so much joy as the news recently that BLSA won the ambitious and daring litigation case against the South African Government to save the African Penguin from extinction. Fishing around their main breeding colonies is now prohibited through the permanent and science-backed protections won in this court-sanctioned settlement.

PROGRAMME – MAY 2025



4 May – Bishop's Bird Park



13 May – Photography Club meeting
"Flock to Marion, Again!" 18:00



9 – 11 May – Wagon Drift Camp



17 May – Roodeplaat NR



20 May – Pretoria Botanical Garden



25 May – Devon Grasslands

All invoices for annual **BLNG** membership fees were sent out early March.

You need to pay **BLSA separately** for membership if you so wish. Contact BLSA at membership@blsa.org.za

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