

BLING WINGS

Golden-breasted Bunting [Anne-Marie van der Merwe]



Reflections: Club Meeting – 13 August



Most of us followed Hera and Royal Wasí's 5000 km long-distance migration with something close to trepidation this autumn. Only Hera made it. Jessica Wilmot from BLSA, our guest speaker, explained the pioneering study to learn more about European Roller migration, in the hope that key locations can be identified and protected, thereby making migration a less risky undertaking. The worrying decline of 33% in these rollers raised concerns and sparked this initiative.

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MORELETA NR – 3 AUGUST

Liesl de Swardt guided the group. Photographs by Iléma Fourie & Bridgette Hamilton.



This outing was all about bird ringing!



Cape Robin-Chat in the mist net.



Thick-billed Weaver being measured



BOEKENHOUTKLOOF – 16 AUGUST

The BLNG August theme, that wonderful specials may be seen close to home, continued this trip, led by JP van der Merwe. He had his hands full with the 20 members attending and a vehicle recovery after Imran's car got stuck in the mud. Philip Calinikos was the hero of the day. Highlights were African Snipe, Marsh Owl and White-backed Duck, and even Orange-breasted Waxbills.



African Snipe [Imran Vanker]



Marsh Owl [Marna Buys]



Red-billed Oxpecker [Anne-Marie vd Merwe]



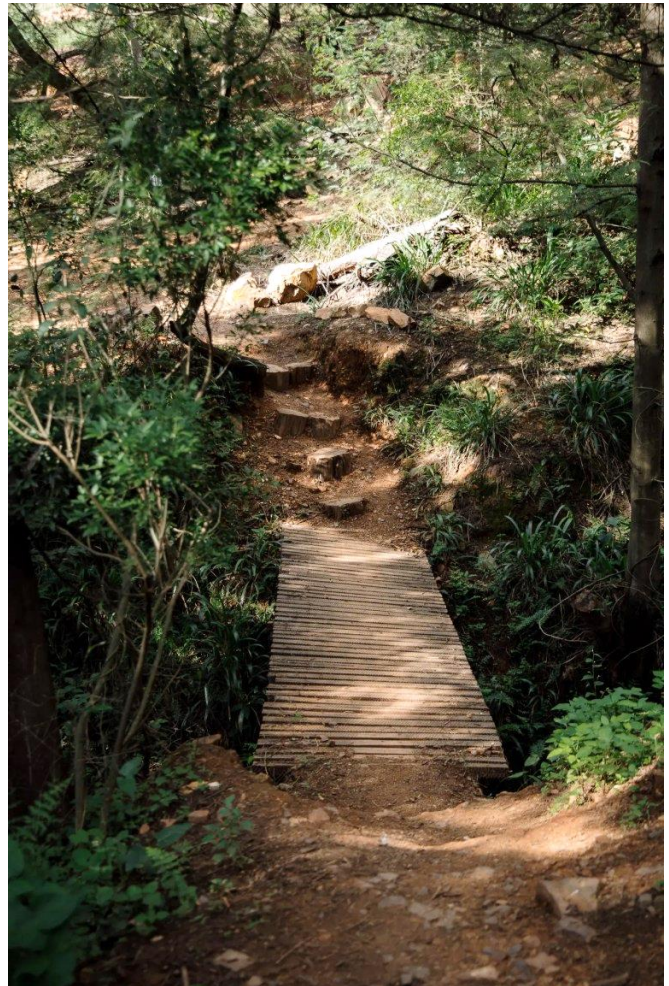
Blacksmith Lapwing [Bill Gie]

WOLWESPRUIT TRAIL PARK – 21 AUGUST

This annual outing, led by Liesl de Swardt, is sure to take one past the stream and up a kopje. Highlights were Grey-headed Bush-Shrike, Bar-throated Apalis and Brown-backed Honeybird. With a visit to the restaurant on the deck afterwards, a most enjoyable morning was had.



[All Sheleph Burger]



BLSA SOUTH AFRICAN BIRD FAIR 24 AUGUST – COUNTRY CLUB, WOODMEAD



Sheleph Burger and Salome van Niekerk, both BLNG club members, visited the South African Bird Fair at the Woodmead Country Club. Club members could also register online for talks on Saving Marion Island's seabirds, Botha's Lark, SA's most threatened terrestrial species, Endemics, Photographic Competition winners, Birding Grasslands, Garden bird feeding, European Roller tracking, a Bird Fair Quiz, and Newman's Birds by Colour by Nick Newman, and using BirdLasser. Find the talks on YouTube now!

MARIEVALE BIRD SANCTUARY – 31 AUGUST

With migrants returning from the northern hemisphere, Marievale is the place to visit in the hope of bagging a wader still in breeding plumage, or even a lifer. Despite many of the pans still being dry, 72 species were seen, with highlights African Marsh Harrier and even an African Rail on the way out. Hannes van den Berg led the outing.



African Swamphen [Hannes van den Berg]



African Marsh Harrier [Hannes van den Berg]



Greater Flamingos with possibly one or more Lesser Flamingos [Hannes van den Berg]

REGIONAL AND LOCAL RARITIES AND INTERESTING SIGHTINGS

August kicked in with several good sightings over the long weekend. Both Ivonne Coetzee and Philip Calinikos found **Yellow-bellied Eremomela** in Dinokeng at Wagon Drift Game Lodge. A BLNG group found a **Yellow-bellied Eremomela** at Mkhombo Dam.



[Marna Buys]

Jandré Verster found a **Wire-tailed Swallow** at Zaagkuil drift, while the BLNG group found a pair that seemed to be breeding at Mkhombo Dam.



[Marna Buys]

A great find by the BLNG group was a **Bat Hawk** at ATV Bird Sanctuary in Rust de Winter.



[Marna Buys]

They also found **Grey-backed Sparrow-larks** on a private farm nearby.

Tristan Silver reported an **Orange River White-eye** in Walter Sisulu Botanical Gardens – possibly the same bird seen there a month or more ago.

Jandré Verster spotted a **Black Stork** next to the N1 highway north of Bela-Bela.

Michael Wright spotted a single **Black Saw-wing** amongst other swallows at Marievale towards the end of August.

These sightings were compiled from various social media Wider Gauteng Rarity sources. Kindly send in any rarity sightings to me, should you not want to post this on one of the dedicated forums – wanting to protect the site or other reasons - Ed.

Photograph of the month

With the many species and rich birding opportunities available in Gauteng, it is sometimes quite difficult to find the one photograph that should grace this spot. This Orange-breasted Bush-Shrike is a true gift from nature to brighten up our cheerless and bleak Highveld after-winter. Thank you, Hannes van den Berg , for this beauty.





Kruger400 **Gold Medallists!** Sean Naudé, Sheleph Burger, Craig Green and JP van der Merwe narrowly missed Platinum with 387 species photographed.

*A warm thank-you to all our club's outing leaders, and our eager photographers, for your support.
You make BLiNG WiNGS possible!*

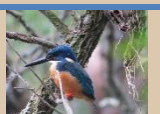
PROGRAMME



7 September – Groenkloof NR



15 September – Hex River Thornveld



18 September – Kimiad Golf Course



21 – 24 September – Camp: Caracal Lodge



28 September – Mkhombo Dam

10 September – Club Meeting

This meeting marks the inaugural speech by Sean Naudé, the new BLNG Chair.

The following topic will be presented:



[elephantsalive.org]

Bee hives in Marula trees to protect them against elephants – Robin Cook

Ten years ago, 50 beehives were hung in 50 marula trees to evaluate whether honeybees could be used to protect trees against elephant impact. Hear about the fascinating data gained.

Compilation and lay-out by I Coetzee

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