

BLiNG WiNGS

Green-winged Pytilia [JP van der Merwe]

Edition 39 September 2026

CLUB MEETING 8 September

To be able to distinguish swifts and swallows swirling through the skies – Stephan Terblanche's informative key to identification was noteworthy and a great help.



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BLSA BIRD FAIR – 5 September





HEX RIVER THORNVELD – 13 September

If we are honest, most club members join this outing at least once in the hopes of seeing the star attraction – the Yellow-throated Sandgrouse, found at the very southern-most tip of its limited distribution range in Southern Africa. And even though many other interesting species may be picked up at the roadsides of farm tracks afterwards, Keanu Kanto, our leader, knows exactly where to stake out these scarce species first thing of the morning. The wait was over very soon. Sheleph Burger had her camera ready.



Male and female Yellow-throated Sandgrouse [Sheleph Burger]

MORELETA KLOOF NR – 16 September

Angela Openshaw was kind enough to lead this bird walk after the original Irene Dairy Village Farm guide had to withdraw due to a foot operation. A wonderful highlight was spotting the first Red-chested Cuckoo of the season.



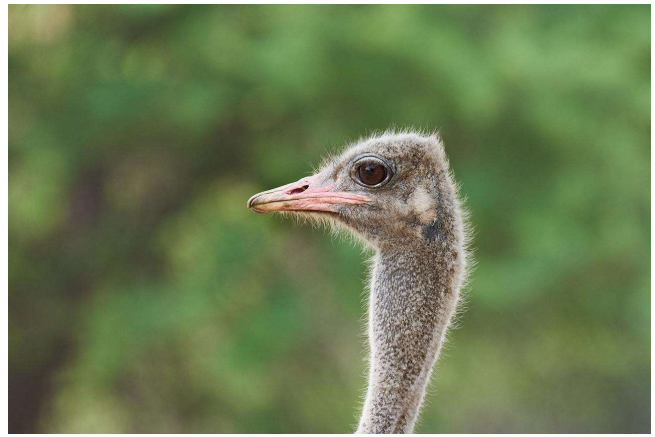
Red-chested Cuckoo [Joshua Pascoe]



[Helena Theron]



Black-headed Heron [Wilma van der Merwe]



Common Ostrich [Wilma van der Merwe]



[Micheline Moore]

BUFFELSDRIFT CONSERVANCY – 26 September

When Marna Buys, our leader, contacted Rob Geddes for permission to enter the conservancy and his property, the Roodeplaat Indigenous Nursery, he told her that it was pumping with birds. A pair of Water Thick-knees were around, nesting Yellow-bellied Greenbulbs added spice, and a nesting Black Sparrowhawk could be seen from the entry road in a copse of bluegums. In the event, the Thick-knees stayed hidden, as did the Greenbulbs. But the enjoyable walk had more than enough to keep us entertained, including a Gabar Goshawk, Lesser Masked Weaver, and more. 88 Species were seen.



[Ivonne Coetzee]



Brown-hooded Kingfisher [Robin Naude]



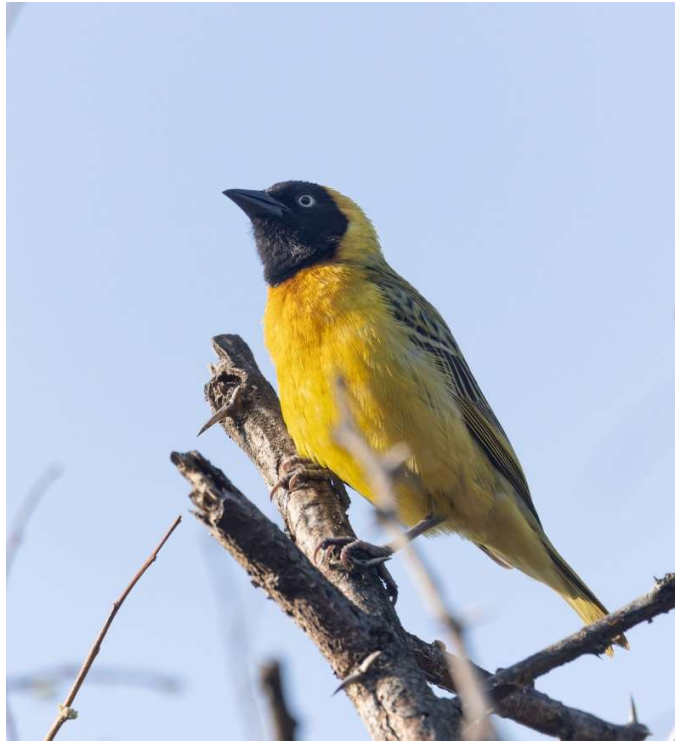
Bar-throated Apalis [Marna Buys]



Black-headed Heron [Giel Roode]



Black Sparrowhawk [Marna Buys]



Lesser Masked Weaver [Marna Buys]



Acacia Pied Barbet [Denise Roode]



[Ivonne Coetzee]

REGIONAL AND LOCAL RARITIES AND INTERESTING SIGHTINGS

The national rarity, the **Lesser Black-backed Gull**, continued to show well at Marievale during September.



Lesser Black-backed Gull [Hannes Swanepoel]

The celebrity of Walter Sisulu Botanical Gardens, a single **Collared Sunbird**, remained there. (Andy Featherstone)

Rob Geddes reported both nesting **Water Thick-knees** at Buffelsdrift Conservancy, and an **African Woolly-necked Stork** also made a surprise visit.

An interesting record at Bishop Bird Park in Wierda Park occurred when BLNG ringers caught a **Terrestrial Brownbul** in their mist nets.

A BLNG group under guidance of Philip Calinikos found an **African Cuckoo Hawk** in the Wilge River area, while Christo Swart also found one at Mabusa NR.



Terrestrial Brownbul



African Cuckoo Hawk [Craig Green]



Nesting **Southern Bald Ibis** were seen at Markon River Lodge by BLNG campers [Craig Green]



Verreaux Eagle-Owls were raising a chick in Johannesburg [Jacques Jordaan]

John Kinghorn had an exciting find near Devon when he encountered a **Wattled Crane**.

WITKRUISARENDE

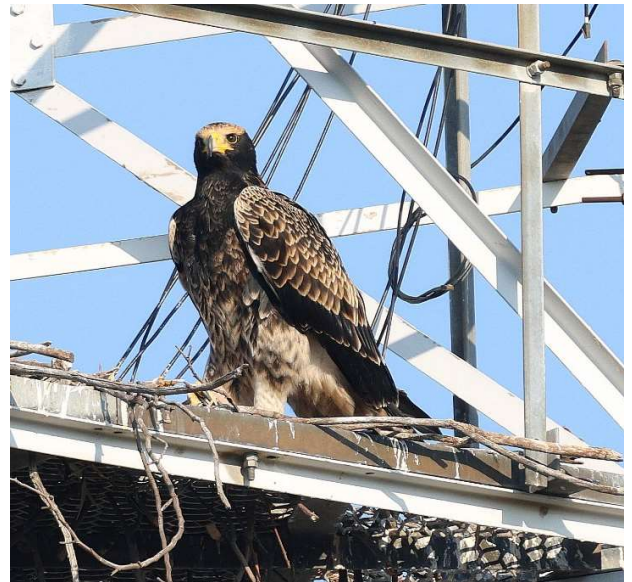
Hiermee my volgende episode.

Op 24 Julie het ek die wit donsveervoëltjie gekry en op 21 Augustus, amper 'n maand later, 'n yslike knaap.

Ek was intussen vanoggend, 29 September, weer op die berg om na die arende te gaan kyk en het hierdie deel bygeskryf op my dagboek:

"Ongeveer 3 weke verby vandat ek laas na die arende gaan kyk het. Ek verwag dat die kuiken, wat nou al groot is, sal begin vlerke oefen. Ek was oggend halfsewe op die berg toe kry ek die knaap regop sit op een van die dwarsbalke van die MTN toring. Nog nie gewaag om te vlieg nie. Hy was eers alleen toe sy ma later bykom en eenkant op die toring kom sit. Dit was maar stil vanoggend. Teen halfagt het die ma uitgevlieg en die kleintjie het moeggeraak en gaan lê. Die pa het nog nie opgedaag nie. Teen half 9 het ek besluit om te gaan, ek was darem twee ure by hulle. Die mannetjie sou weldra kom, hopelik met kos in sy bek en die wyfie sou ook terugkeer. Ek neem 'n paar fotos. Baie interessant dat sy bors en keel en gesig eerste swart word, maar dat dit bo-op die kop bruin bly."

Pieter Heslinga



Photograph of the month

Spring has arrived at last with fresh greens and all around us birds are busily calling, courting and have started building nests. Kevin James's stunning photograph encapsulates all of this – the pure ecstasy of our Bokmakierie in full cry, the bursts of colour and arrested motion against the bokeh background, and the delicate leaves all draw the viewer's attention. The background is blurred, indicating a shallow depth of field, which isolates the bird and foreground sharply. The placement of the bird according to the golden ratio, slightly off-centre, ensures that the dramatic black collar, eye and open beak form a strong focal point. But it is the brilliant yellow of our subject which rings in the joy of spring and celebrates all we birders enjoy.





BLNG

EVENING MEETING

Tuesday, 13 October 2026

18h30

SPEAKER
Philip Calinikos

VENUE
Eastside Community Church and School, Moreleta Park.



Forty-Three Years on the Wing: My Life in Birdwatching

(or 9 999 hours of birding memoirs!)

Personal birdwatching experiences with BLNG and memories from trips across Southern and East Africa, Madagascar, Seychelles, South America and Europe. Plus snippets from the club's history, from joining in 1983 to the present.

A relaxed evening of snacks, refreshments and laughter!

Also available on ZOOM.
Details shared via the BLNG Alert WhatsApp group.

Directions:
From the N1, take the Rigel off-ramp. Turn east onto Delmas Road (R50), then left onto Solomon Mahlangu Drive (M10). Turn right onto Garsfontein Road. Cross Rubenstein Drive and turn right at the next traffic lights into Primula Road. Enter through the first gate on the right.

Venue: 850 Primula Rd (corner of Garsfontein Rd), Moreleta Park.

PROGRAMME – OCTOBER 2026

	5 Oct – Hike at Rietvlei NR
	10 Oct – Old Verena Rd & Mabusa
	18 Oct – Colbyn NR
	28 Oct – Gnu Valley

For enquiries: <mailto:secretary@blng.co.za>

	Membership type	Membership fees	Notes
Main member	Individual Adult	R 405.00	Choose only 1
	Senior Citizen (60+)	R 260.00	
	Student with student card (18-25)	R 195.00	
Family member	Spouse	R 175.00	Choose as many as applicable
	Child 1 (12-18)	R 75.00	
	Child 2 (12-18)	R 75.00	
	Child under 12	Free	

Please note that payments made after March will include pro-rata fees up to February 2027

BLNG Membership allows you to participate **free of charge** in weekly bird outings with experienced leaders. Monthly Camps and courses come at an extra fee.

NEVER force fluids or drop water into a birds beak!



I am dehydrated. But the dropper in your hand will make this worse.

Do not tilt my head back. Do not squeeze water into my beak.

A shallow dish. Let me drink on my own. I know how to keep the water out.

If I am too weak, moisten the outside of my bill. Never inside.

WHEN HUMANS FORCE WATER

A



THE BIRD PANICS — Glottis opens and closes rapidly, out of sync.

B



WATER ENTERS TRACHEA → FILLS LUNGS — Bird cannot cough it out. Avian lungs are rigid.

MAY SEEM FINE FOR AN HOUR — Aspiration pneumonia → Dead within 12-24 hours.

Glottis (Airway to Lungs)

- Water in mouth can enter lungs → **ASPIRATION**
- Birds **CANNOT** cough water out

Baby Birds

- Do **NOT** drink water
- Get moisture from food

Gaping = FEEDING REFLEX

Adult Birds

- Open mouth can mean **STRESS or FEAR**
- Only offer shallow water dish if upright

DO THIS INSTEAD:



Place in a **BOX**



Keep **DARK, WARM & QUIET**



NO FOOD or WATER



Call a Licensed **WILDLIFE REHABILITATOR**

Compilation and layout by I Coetzee

Submit articles and photographs to

ivonnecoetzee@outlook.com

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