

Cape Parrot Newsletter

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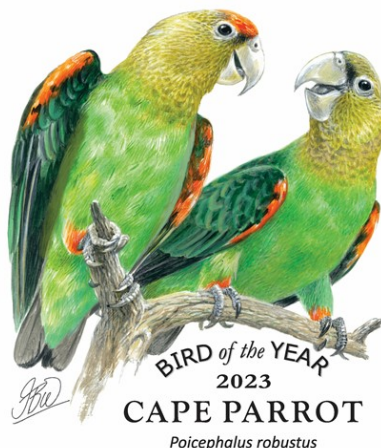
Map of areas
covered for
CPBBD 5

Counting the bird of the year

BirdLife South Africa declared the Cape Parrot (*Poicephalus robustus*) as Bird of the Year for 2023. They partnered with their BirdLife Species Guardians, the Cape Parrot Working Group and the Wild Bird Trust's Cape Parrot Project to raise awareness about the species through the campaign.

The Cape Parrot Big Birding Day (CPBBD) was initiated in 1998 by the Cape Parrot Working Group and held annually since. It is now in its 26th year and the count has helped us monitor the species and motivate for various conservation measures. Cape Parrots are considered a flagship species for South Africa's Afromontane/-temperate indigenous forest patches and their surrounding grasslands.

We are very grateful to those who have participated over the years, to those who keep it up every year, and to the coordinators who rally their teams for their ongoing contribution to this initiative. We hope that they will continue to assist in the coming years. We look forward to this year's count honouring the Bird of the Year. Please see Page 4 if you want to get involved in the count. This year the Hogsback/Amatole and Limpopo region will do their count on 22 and 23 April 2023, while the rest will count on 6 and 7 May 2023.



Cape Parrot Counting Day 2023



Wanted
Volunteers to
help count the
endangered
Cape Parrot in
the wild

Sat 6th May (pm) & Sun 7th
May (am)

Join us in our annual evening and morning Cape Parrot count to help save one of South Africa's most endangered birds. It is South Africa's 2023 Bird of the Year!

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



NOTE: UKZN students need to contact Presheer Singh (email: presheer.singh@ukmail.com) before the 21 April 2023 if they are keen to participate

Bird of the year updates

The bird of the year activities kicked off with a talk at BirdLife SA's Conservation Conversations webinar in January. Dr Francis Brooke from the Cape Parrot Project and Prof Colleen Downs from the University of KwaZulu-Natal, presented and answered questions about Cape Parrots.

There was a discussion about the conservation measures being implemented to protect Cape Parrots and their habitat such as the reforestation efforts by the Cape Parrot Project and the Cape Parrot Big Birding Day by the Cape Parrot Working Group.

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=-i7PkbxWKdc&t=3094s&ab_channel=BirdLifeSouthAfrica



One of the initiatives the Species Guardians undertake for the Bird of the Year is to get education out to schools and groups working with children to educate them on the selected species. The Cape Parrot materials were launched in March and one of the key phrases used to refer to the species was the “jewel of the mistbelt forest”. Included in the materials are fact sheets and infographics sharing information on the birds such as how to identify them, where they are distributed and a colouring-in sheet. There is also a lesson plan designed to assist educators in teaching about the species. If you know of anyone who works with children and may be interested in including this in their lesson plans please direct them to the BirdLife website.

You can download the education materials here:

<https://www.birdlife.org.za/bird-of-the-year-2023/>



Recent Research

A Special Issue published in 2021 in the journal *Diversity* titled “Ecology and Conservation of Parrots in Their Native and Non-Native Ranges” included a paper titled “A Literature Synthesis of Actions to Tackle Illegal Parrot Trade”. Psittaciformes are affected greatly by illegal wildlife trade and there are many elements to understand the impact of this threat. Many studies focus on the actors, extraction rates, and routes in trade but for effective policy we also need to understand research aims and actions across the trade chain, regions, and species. This paper was a review of research published on illegal Psittaciformes trade globally. They found that research into trade had increased especially for American and Australasian species in recent years. Much of the research is skewed towards the intermediary side of the trade chain so they called for more research needed into the supply side. Although behavior is changing, specific interventions like protecting areas, livelihood incentives, and legal substitutes were mentioned as actions that are under-explored in parrots.

In our context, the Cape Parrot Project has already initiated and implemented protecting areas and livelihood incentives with their reforestation and treeprenuer programme, and the Cape Parrot Working Group has addressed the case of legal substitutes with the captive breeding programme and studbook. The Cape Parrot and Mistbelt Forest Action Plan is quite comprehensive and addresses the main challenges faced by the species with carefully thought out and actionable solutions.

Other recent research relevant to forests, from Prof Colleen Downs lab at UKZN, includes work on the mistbelt forest system, seed dispersal, species richness, functional diversity and biodiversity, invasives, climate change, habitat fragmentation, rural communities and societal changes, and conservation. All these studies help us understand forests better and can inform the actionable solutions to find more effective interventions.

Reference for paper:

Sánchez-Mercado A, Ferrer-Paris JR, Rodríguez JP, L. Tella J. A Literature Synthesis of Actions to Tackle Illegal Parrot Trade. *Diversity*. 2021; 13(5):191. <https://doi.org/10.3390/d13050191>



<https://www.capeparrotactiongroup.org/>

Contact persons for Cape Parrot Big Birding Day

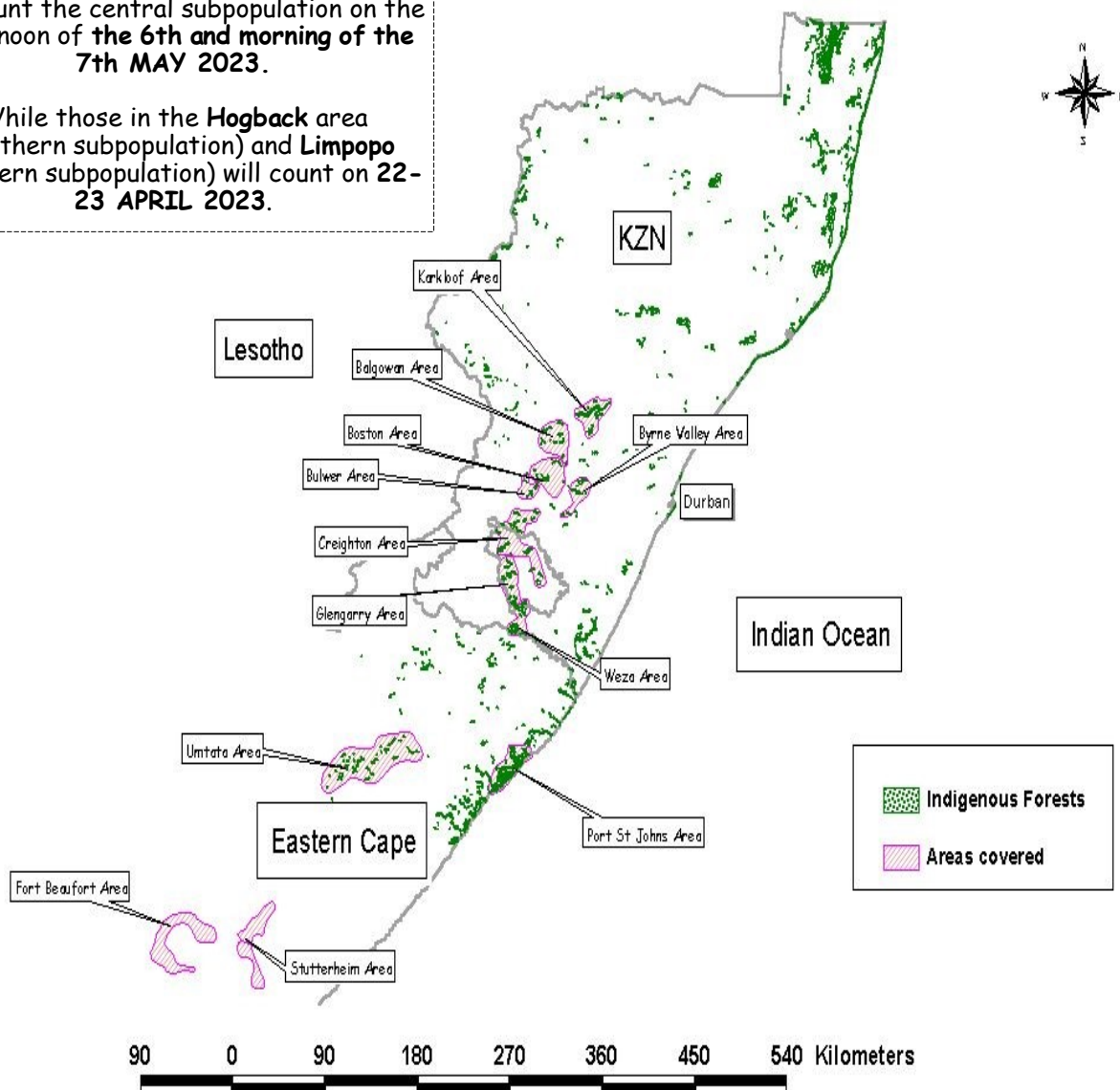
22 & 23 April or 06 & 07 May 2023

(See next page for map)

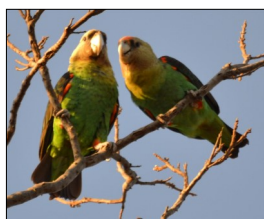
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Wolkberg/ Lekgalameetse Nature Reserve	John Davies	076 527 9632	johnd@ewt.org.za

KwaZulu-Natal and the former Transkei will count the central subpopulation on the afternoon of the 6th and morning of the 7th MAY 2023.

While those in the **Hogback** area (southern subpopulation) and **Limpopo** (northern subpopulation) will count on 22-23 APRIL 2023.



Main areas covered by coordinators on the Cape Parrot Big Birding Day (Limpopo areas not shown)



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<https://cpwg.ukzn.ac.za/>

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