



THE BABBLER

Newsletter of BirdLife Zimbabwe

Feb-Mar 2020
No. 152

Hi everyone,

Birding Big Day was held on 30th November and was just a 24-hour event. The results can be read [here](#) and the link for the BirdLasser teams is included. You can also explore more detail with the spreadsheet on the BLZ website, which should be uploaded to the site soon.

Not as many teams participated this year but fortunately there was a reasonable spread with Vumba, Harare, Hwange, Bulawayo and Gonarezhou teams getting specials restricted to their respective parts of the country. It would be nice to receive your trip reports too!

This January we have already done some waterbird counts. If you are able, please visit your sites in February, if you haven't been out yet, and don't forget - you can always send me any extra forms from other times of the year if you notice a sudden influx of birds. These are always interesting and informative. *Please remember to send in your forms without too much delay and happy 2020 birding!*

Ian Riddell gemsaf@mango.zw

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National

Birding Big Day 2019

Ian Riddell

PART I

2019 was a quieter BBD with 9 teams as against 12 last year and 4 of those used BirdLasser, where we could follow their progress online. All teams did 24 hours, to tie in with SA and the BirdLasser event, restricted to 00h00 to 23h59 on Saturday 30th November.

BirdLasser is southern Africa's foremost smart phone app primarily used for SABAP2 atlassing, an "easy way to record your African bird sightings and share with friends, your community and contribute to conservation."

This year teams covered Harare, Bulawayo, Kadoma, Vumba and Gonarezhou. A spreadsheet is available on our BLZ site for those who would like to explore the results in more detail.

Congratulations to the winning team, YAB Hwange Hawks who birded around Hwange and saw 220 birds.



The four BirdLasser teams birded Harare, Hwange, Bulawayo & Gonarezhou

Links:

<https://www.birdlasser.com/events/bbd2019zim24> (click in the **Position** box to show or hide the birds on the map; hover your mouse over any drop pin to see the species).

http://www.birdlifezimbabwe.org/b_conservation_11_sur.html As at the end of January the spreadsheet has yet to be uploaded to the website, but check for it on this link.

Results – Birding Big Day 2019

Table 1. Overall list ranking on number of species

Position	Species	Team name	Leader	Area
1	220	YAB Hwange Hawks	J-M. Blake	Hwange
2	151	Mhandambiri Creepers	R. Chirimuta	Harare
3	124	Gonarezhou Lassers	E. van der Westhuizen	Gonarezhou
4	118	Umgoosers	A. Randell	Bulawayo
5	101	Charama Chicks	S. Stone	Kadoma
6	95	Wacko-Jacko Duo	M. Jackson	Bulawayo
7	80	JB x2	J. Brebner	Bulawayo
8	73	Louw Toppies	I. Louw	Vumba
9	26	The Bushwackers	G. Lightfoot	Bulawayo

The teams that used BirdLasser

PART II – THE ORNITHOLOGICAL RESULTS

360 species were recorded (302 on the BirdLasser leader board).

Great White Pelicans were found by two teams – Mhandambiri Creepers (Kent Estate dam, where they did their birding) and

Gonarezhou Lassers. The African Darter was a *bust* around Harare, where they are still suffering from netting, so it was left to Bulawayo, Hwange and Gonarezhou teams to find them.

Goliath Herons were only seen in Hwange and Gonarezhou, and the only Purple Heron was seen at Kent Estate, whilst the Charama Chicks were the only team to find Black Heron and YAB Hwange Hawks were the sole spotters of Black-crowned Night-heron.



A Woolly-necked Stork in southern Gonarezhou, an Oct dawn in 2018. Photo L. Faccio

The only Black Stork was seen by the Wacko-Jacko Duo, and the only Woolly-necked Stork by Gonarezhou Lassers. The Saddle-billed Stork was seen in Bulawayo, Hwange and Gonarezhou, with Harare, Hwange and Gonarezhou finding Marabou Stork. Glossy Ibis were fairly well distributed, seen by two Bulawayo teams, and in Harare, Hwange and Gonarezhou. The Hadedda Ibis was a tough one and only found by the Gonarezhou Lassers.

White-backed Ducks were elusive and only found at Kent Estate and African Black Duck was found there and at Bulawayo. Cape Teal were predictably restricted and seen in Hwange and by the Charama Chicks (two birds). This year the Hottentot Teal was restricted to Hwange where a 'special' was also found - the Cape Shoveler! It occasionally occurs in western Zimbabwe and even less frequently on the plateau.

Table 2. Distribution of vultures on Birding Big Day 2019

	Hwange	Gonarezhou	Bulawayo	Harare
White-backed Vulture	X	X	X	X
Lappet-faced Vulture	X	X	X	
Hooded Vulture	X	X		
White-headed Vulture	X			



Red-crested Korhaan. Photo R. MacDonald

Four Bulawayo teams and YAB Hwange Hawks got Yellow-billed Kite, but only JB x2 found Verreaux's Eagle around Bulawayo, whilst Umgoosers found Long-crested Eagle. Martial Eagles were quite well distributed and were seen in Bulawayo, Harare, Hwange and Gonarezhou. Bateleurs were only picked up in

Hwange and Gonarezhou. At last the Louw Toppies enter the picture, the only team to see Augur Buzzard, and YAB Hwange Hawks were the only team to spot an Osprey.

Lanner Falcons pitched up in Harare (Kent Estate) and Hwange, but Eurasian Hobby and Lesser Kestrel - the only other falcons recorded - were only found in Hwange.

The Coqui Francolin, Red-billed Spurfowl and Grey Crowned Cranes were only found in Hwange and Shelley's Francolin at Kent Estate, with the Red-necked Spurfowl at Vumba.

Down in Gonarezhou, the Gonarezhou Lassers found African Finfoot and Red-crested Korhaan, with the latter also seen by the YAB Hwange Hawks, whilst the Charama Chicks were happy to find Greater Painted-snipe, as they did last year. YAB Hwange Hawks and Gonarezhou Lassers got Common Ringed Plover, but the White-fronted Plover was restricted to Gonarezhou and Pied Avocet and

Bronze-winged Courser to Hwange. Both these teams got the African Skimmer though.

Robins Camp yielded up Speckled Pigeons in Hwange, but JB x2 also found them somewhere in the Bulawayo area. Eastern Bronze-naped Pigeon, Lemon Dove and Blue-spotted Wood-dove were nice eastern highlands finds for the Louw Toppies and naturally they found other 'area specials' in the Vumba. Tambourine Doves were claimed for Harare, Hippo Pools and Vumba. Brown-headed Parrot is a lowveld special and was found in Gonarezhou and Vumba produced the Livingstone's Turaco.

African Emerald Cuckoos were found in Hwange, Kadoma and Vumba but Black Coucals were restricted to Harare, Burchell's Coucal to Gonarezhou and White-browed Coucal to Bulawayo.

YAB Hwange Hawks found Southern White-faced Scops-owl, but they, Umgoosers and Gonarezhou Lassers all got Verreaux's Eagle-owl.



Southern White-faced Scops-owl

Hwange and Gonarezhou ticked African Black Swift and I presume there wasn't any misidentification with Common Swift.

It is nice to receive a trip report, albeit last minute, and reports from other teams would be greatly welcomed. Something for next year, teams? Team Funbunch don't appear in the results above (it was just a test run), but here is an account of their day. Ed.

Trip report by Hatitye Mangwiwo

Team Funbunch
aka #thefunbunch
Tendai Chinho
Lerato Dhlakama
Hatitye Mangwiwo
Prosper Ngwenyama
Donald Ruzungunde (sub in the afternoon by Josh Marikop)
John V
also supported by Chenai Musekiwa, at Mukuvisi

YAB Hwange Hawks found Narina Trogon but Vumba missed them, and Hwange was also the only team to find Blue-cheeked Bee-eater, Purple Roller and Racquet-tailed Roller. Southern Ground-hornbills were also ticked in Hwange and Gonarezhou.

Vumba had a list of other 'specials' including White-eared Barbet, Yellow-rumped Tinkerbird, Square-tailed Drongo, Yellow-streaked Greenbul, Tiny Greenbul, Stripe-cheeked Greenbul, Cape Robin-chat, White-starred Robin, Swynnerton's Robin, Barratt's Warbler, Chirinda Apalis, Cape Grassbird, Eastern Saw-wing, etc. Bennett's Woodpecker, Dusky Lark, Chestnut-backed Sparrowlark were only seen in Hwange, and Harare turned up that miombo special, the Spotted Creeper. Arnot's Chat, however, only appeared in Hwange, Wood Pipit in Vumba and Rosy-throated Longclaw in Harare.

Crimson-breasted Shrike was a Hwange bird but Common Myna was seen in Bulawayo, Hwange and Gonarezhou. Red-billed Oxpecker turned up in Bulawayo and Hwange, and Yellow-billed Oxpecker in Hwange and Gonarezhou.

Malachite Sunbird, Bronzy Sunbird and Olive Sunbird were more Vumba specials and they got Collared Sunbird too.

The most common bird was the Dark-capped Bulbul, seen by all teams. The Tropical Boubou and Black-collared Barbet were next, seen by 8 teams. 141 species were only seen once. The rest of the spread can be seen on the excel file on the BLZ website.

Team Funbunch was an informal initiative by members of the BLZ Youth Club, to get a taste of what Birding Big Day is all about. Our first stop was Cleveland Catchment Area, across Donnybrook Road, to the west of Mabvuku.

We arrived equipped with binoculars and bird guides, (kindly made available by BirdLife Zimbabwe,) and ready for a day of intense birding. Being relatively new at this, I was ready to learn as much as I could in the allocated space of a full day. All along, I also had the private wish of seeing my first Long-crested Eagle☺

We disembarked from the vehicle and were welcomed into Birding Big Day by some Cattle Egrets. Having previously assumed all egrets to be one kind of bird, I was soon shown how to distinguish their different types from the colour of their bills/beaks, legs and feathers.

Taking note, we continued across the cultivated strips of land towards some rocky outcrops, a few of which were home to fresh water springs. The vegetation here was habitat to a variety of species, the first of which we saw was the Variable Sunbird. All my life I had believed this to be a humming bird, but was soon told that such birds don't occur in this part of the world. Other bird species we encountered here included two different weavers, of which we saw the Southern Masked, but only heard the Spectacled Weaver.

The noisy Arrow-marked Babblers were next to the party. (I now get why the BLZ magazine is called *The Babbler* ☺)

I was then told how fortunate we were to see a Mocking Cliff-chat. They aren't often seen so close to the city. This was our sighting of the early morning.

Looking back where we had been, on our way back to the car, we managed to spot through our binoculars a hovering Black-Shouldered Kite, hovering in the distance.

The last bird we caught a glimpse of before leaving Mabvuku was the beautiful Purple-crested Turaco.

But no Long-crested Eagle . . .

Our adventure led us next to the Mukuvisi woodlands, where we were welcomed by the Miombo Double-collared Sunbird. We continued to the viewing deck and at the watering hole, managed to observe a large variety of birds. Some African Sacred Ibis and

Glossy Ibises, Abdim's Storks, as well as African Wattled Lapwings, all congregated around the water, while African Palm-swifts flew overhead.

We then proceeded deeper into the woodland, along the way managing to enjoy a pair of Fork-tailed Drongos chasing a Pied Crow.

In the denser woodland we encountered the African Paradise-flycatcher, which personally speaking, was rivalled only by the Violet-backed Starling, as far as beauty is concerned. Also amongst the trees we managed to catch a glimpse of a few White-crested Helmet-shrikes as well as Black-backed Puffbacks. On our way out of the woodlands, we encountered Bar-throated Apalises, Speckled Mousebirds, as well as the stylish stepping Kurrichane Thrush. Finally, to bid us farewell, the Red-billed Firefinch, as well as the Blue Waxbill.

But still no sign of a Long-crested Eagle . . .

Finally, we proceeded to Monavale Vlei. On arrival, we feasted our eyes on a couple of Black-headed Herons foraging amidst the tall grass. The binoculars helped make them out clearly as they were quite some distance away. A few moments later, a Grey Heron flew lazily by.



Black-headed Herons at Monavale

It was hot now and the birds were shy, although we did hear the call of the Tropical Boubou in the distance. Walking on, and closer to the stream, we saw a group of Helmeted Guinea-fowls. Always within view, they seemed to guide us during the rest of our journey through the vlei.

We then encountered the Red-eyed Dove as well as the Cape Turtle-doves, while a Laughing Dove, well, laughed somewhere obscured by the vegetation.

A Senegal Coucal made a brief appearance, before disappearing again amidst the branches of a densely covered tree. While trying to make out where it had gone, lo and behold, a LONG-CRESTED EAGLE! At last!

Being quite far away from us, we had to settle for viewing it through our binoculars. Nonetheless, I was very excited: a wish finally comes true.



Then, quite unexpectedly, as we retreated back to our vehicle, overjoyed at what I had seen, another Long-crested Eagle flew overhead. I took in as much as I could with my naked eyes, following its flight, away from us, until it perched alongside the first eagle we had seen. My wish come true twice 🌍!

This was Birding Big Day for Team Funbunch: in total, we managed to see or hear 58 different bird species and we have promised ourselves of doubling that number in next year's event.

The other teams had better watch out!

PS: We also saw a 'mystery bird' that defeated our collective effort to identify it and haunted one of our members in her dreams, the following night. (Names withheld to protect the vulnerable!)

Would really love to know what that bird was!

Branch News

Mashonaland

EWANRIGG BOTANICAL GARDENS, Sunday 24th November 2019

The weather was very pleasant after recent rains and our group of 10 members was optimistic of a good haul in this beautiful setting. A Black Cuckoo was seen on the way in, a pair of Black Cuckooshrikes accompanied us as we set off on our walk and a Violet-backed Starling revealed its nesting hole almost immediately, but that early burst was not indicative of the visit as a whole. Our final count was a mere 70 species and this despite the impressive experience and talents of our group.

On our climb up the newly cleared paths to the herb garden, we found Red-throated Twinspot, Copper Sunbird, White-bellied Sunbird and Amethyst Sunbird, Whyte's Barbet, and a Red-chested Cuckoo called. Tropical Boubou and Grey-headed Bush-shrike and Orange-breasted Bush-shrike were all clearly

seen as was a Golden-tailed Woodpecker. But in the main, it was uniformly quiet.

From the café, which is now sadly closed, we made our way down to the lower gardens, picking up Red-backed Mannikin, Jameson's Firefinch, Lesser Honeyguide and Green-backed Honeybird and a few others. No Magpie Mannikins to be seen. The flat area with its picnic spots and wide variety of trees and bushes was no more productive on this occasion except for Spectacled Weaver and Golden Weaver and many Village Weaver nests but no birds.

By 10 a.m. we were assembled in the picnic area for a welcome drink and snack and the rather disappointing listing. However, as always, we were agreed that the outing had been most worthwhile.

Ken Dixon

GREYSTONE PARK, Sunday 15th December and MONA VALE VLEI, Sundays 15th & 22nd December 2019

Serious confusion on these weekends led to very few members taking part in these outings. I went to Greystone to find a locked gate and only one couple of birders, members and skilled birders who never having taken part in an outing before, prepared for the walk. We parked outside and went ahead.

What a pleasure to see the breach in the dam wall repaired and the path across it newly reopened. But sad to see that due to the lack of rain the dam was still empty and the stream barely flowing. However, the birds were there, around 50 different species, mostly woodland birds, the Red-collared Widowbird, Red-faced Cisticola and Dark-capped Yellow Warbler being the only grassland species. Signs of summer were the Lesser Striped Swallows. The Village Weaver colony, usually on the dam wall slope, has moved to the Gaydon Road end but is

still abuzz with activity. A Purple-banded Sunbird was a special treat to add to Variable Sunbird, White-bellied Sunbird and Miombo Double-collared Sunbirds. Long-crested Eagle and Black-shouldered Kite constituted the raptors.

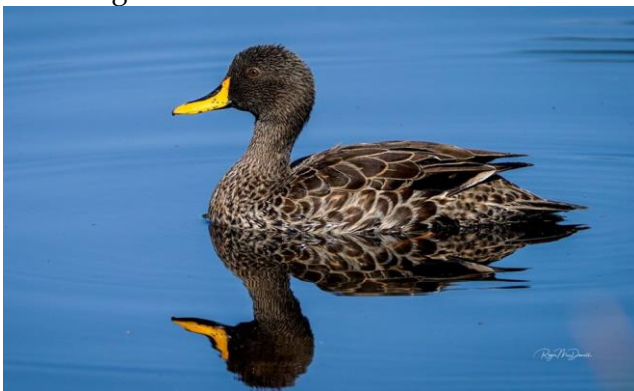
Let's hope abundant rains will return the Preserve to its former glory before our next visit. Congratulations and thanks to all those who have contributed in any way to the reconstruction of the dam wall.

While I was at Greystone, Dorothy Wakeling and Jimmy Muropa observed 40+ species on Monavale Vlei. The following Sunday a small group of us, including a heavyweight from the FitzPatrick Institute, managed only 26 species but a Corn Crake had been heard the previous day.

Ken Dixon

BALLANTYNE PARK, Saturday 11th January 2020

What a difference the rain makes: I visited this popular venue on Friday 10th January following the first real storm of the season and struggled to find 20 species, which was disappointing. However, by Saturday the scene had changed dramatically and the 4 members present had a wildly different experience finding 51 species. There was a fair amount of water in all three dams and this is already attracting waterbirds.



Yellow-billed Duck. Could be a local wanderer, originally an escapee? Photo R. MacDonald

On Ballantyne were 5 White-faced Duck, a Little Grebe and a Yellow-billed Duck, a species that also occurred here in 2019, and an Egyptian Goose soon joined them. A Grey Heron and 2

Black-headed Herons were hunting in the reeds and a couple of Hamerkop soon arrived. The main contrast between the two visits, however, was the number and variety of non-waterbirds.

On Blair Dam were many Southern Red Bishops and a few Red-collared Widowbirds. A Lizard Buzzard sat in a gum, Diderick Cuckoo called and the ever-present Lesser Honeyguide clicked away. The Common Fiscal has obviously bred successfully and showed itself repeatedly. Common Waxbill and Bronze Mannikin flicked through the reeds and along the hedgerow.

Up at Staley there were no ducks but plenty of Southern Masked-weaver, a Golden Weaver at its nest, Yellow-fronted Canary and Brimstone Canary, Dark-capped Bulbul, Brubru, more Southern Red Bishop, Miombo Double-collared Sunbird and Variable Sunbird and 9 Green Wood-hoopoes.

On our way back we added Barn Swallow, African Palm-swift, a Spotted Flycatcher, Scarlet-chested Sunbird and Greater Blue-eared Starling. Perfect timing meant that we reached the car park as light rain began to fall.

Ken Dixon

Waterbird Count, LAKE CHIVERO BIRD SANCTUARY, Sunday 12th January 2020

The previous visit to this location has gone down in the history of the branch as the occasion *Vanellus spinosus* was spotted, signalling a migration of southern African birders to the lake. No such sightings this time for the 10 members as the area is covered in dense weed and grass in which 1000 Spur-winged Lapwings could conceal themselves. However, there was plenty of interest for those who enjoy birding without adding to their life or southern African lists.



A count of the White-breasted Cormorants on the five rock perches, from photos I took, including the above, revealed 326 birds, a third more than the estimate from observers counting with binoculars. There is often a tendency to under-count large groups of waterbirds - Ed.

For example, my first bird noted on getting out of the car was an Osprey, an uncommon passage raptor. At the end of a 100m walk down to the low water shoreline hundreds of birds came into view. Huge rocks out in the open water were covered by numerous White-breasted Cormorants and Reed Cormorants. Then the first 50 or so White-winged Terns flew upstream. More were to appear from time to time making a total of c.300. Grey-headed Gulls were also plentiful, feeding on the muddy spits, while some 20 African Fish-eagles flew over or sat on trees or rocks out in the lake. On the little remaining mud we identified Ruff, Wood Sandpiper, Kittlitz's Plover, Black-winged Stilt, African Spoonbill, c.40 Little Egrets and 2 Great Egrets. Ducks were few and far between: 2 Red-billed Teal and about 20 White-faced Ducks.

Later, when we decamped to the Marimba area for a drinks and chocolate cake break, we saw an amazing 70 or so Grey Heron around the mouth of the Marimba stream. As usual, land and woodland birds were scarce but a Wahlberg's Eagle, a Steppe Buzzard and an Ovambo Sparrowhawk rose from the trees and a White-backed Vulture passed over.

In all we counted 93 species of which about 60 will be in the Waterbird count.

Ken Dixon

Matabeleland

Birding part of the Bulawayo Golf Club Course (2) 17 November 2019

As golfers were out on the course, we decided to take more or less the same route as we did in April to see what we could find. Unfortunately, by the time we managed to set out, it was later than we'd hoped and already sweatingly hot!

As with the previous outing, we started off going down the dirt road towards Winnie's Way where we came across Scaly-feathered Finches, while metallic blue and green flashes drew our attention to Greater Blue-eared Starlings fossicking around in a ditch. A Pied Crow, one of many seen during our walk, took off from a fir tree, cawing loudly. Just before crossing over, we stopped to get a bead on a very noisy White-browed Scrub-robin, trilling away on a small thorn bush. Avoiding the golfers teeing

off, we walked the fence line, stopping first to watch a Double-collared Miombo Sunbird flitting about and saw that there was a nest, presumably his, cunningly revealed in a clump of foliage. A few Cut-throat Finches flew into the same tree. On the other side of the fence, several birds were calling and we picked up a Spotted Flycatcher, Blue Waxbill, Green-winged Pytilia and had a fleeting glimpse of a Brown-crowned Tchagra. Also making a racket was a pair of Brubrus and the male was seen taking off with a large insect squirming in his beak - off to feed young? A big brown job, perched in a tall gum tree, turned out to be a Wahlberg's Eagle but, unfortunately, it didn't stick around to be admired. A bit further along, a clump of Red-billed Quelea mantled a small acacia as we

listened to a Yellow-fronted Tinkerbird tinkling away, a sound that, along with the Diderick's Cuckoo call, accompanied us all the way round on our walk. Just before getting to a horse paddock, there appeared to be two groups of Green Wood-hoopoes, seemingly having some disagreement. Three in one group were sitting on a branch flicking back and forth yelling loudly, while the other group of seven, which eventually flew over us, landed in a tree further along while they continued their chortling, swinging backwards and forwards with long tails flicking.



A Swainson's Spurfowl dashed through the legs of a grazing pony while a donkey brayed and the haunting wail from a Peacock was heard! Moving on down a bushed-in path, crossing a small bridge over a rather smelly stream, a Brown-hooded Kingfisher perched on a branch above the murky water, bobbing its head and we could hear a Terrestrial Brownbul grumbling somewhere close by. Emerging out onto the open course, White-browed Sparrow-weavers were flitting about one of their many colonies as two Common Fiscals were busily hawking and a



very handsome Groundscraper Thrush was about its business on a fairway. We saw plenty of Kurrichane Thrush during the walk as well as several African Hoopoes having a lovely time

aerating the greens and fairways with their sharp beaks. Stopping by another muddy, smelly waterhole, we spotted a Senegal Coucal flying along trailing a long bunch of grass. It landed carefully on the sharp frond of a palm tree and gingerly inching forward, it disappeared out of sight into a mass of ripening dates - a cunning place for a nest. Down another bushed-in, narrow path between greens, a crowd of Bronze Mannikins festooned the bushes, chatting and preening while through a gap in the foliage, we spied a Red-eyed Dove waddling along a fallen tree trunk. Before turning back, several African Palm-swifts, along with White-rumped Swifts, zoomed around overhead and several times, clouds of European Bee-eaters floated overhead too. As we stopped to identify a little brown job, which turned out to be a Yellow Bishop, a Red-headed Weaver lady flew over.

Back across the other side of the road again, we veered left, walking past and round the club house and as a lone Red-faced Mousebird flew by, we saw our first Fork-tailed Drongo. Surprisingly, we hadn't seen any of the Common Mynas that usually inhabit the course in some numbers, but we did find them near the gate back towards the carpark as we watched a Tawny-flanked Prinia perched on the razor wire. An African Paradise-flycatcher and a White-bellied Sunbird were next as we went back through the Qalisa boom and a pair of House Sparrows sat upon a telephone line as several Laughing Doves flew off on our approach. While enjoying a much needed glass of water out on the verandah overlooking the garden, there was much coming and going while onto the list went Yellow-bellied Greenbul, Chin-spot Batis, Golden Weaver, White-browed Robin-chat, Crested Barbet, Dark-capped Bulbul and, surely the sighting of the day, a beautiful Woodland Kingfisher. A final addition to the list was two Yellow-billed Kites.

All in all 58 species (excluding the Peacock, of course!). Also seen or heard - Black-collared Barbet, Tropical Boubou, Grey-backed Camaroptera, Black-throated Canary, Rattling Cisticola, White-crested Helmet-shrike, African Grey Hornbill, Black-backed Puffback, Lilac-breasted Roller, Southern Grey-headed Sparrow and Black-crowned Tchagra.

Marina Jackson and Jenny Brebner



Mark Shaw (0772 343485 sas4security@live.com) has many books on offer. Please contact him if you are interested in expanding your library and for more details.

Author	Title	Year	Price	Comments
Ali, S and Ripley, S D	Handbook of the Birds of India & Pakistan : Vol 1-11	1968-74		
Archer, G and Goodman, E A	Birds of British Somaliland & Gulf of Aden, Vol 3, 5	1961		
Bannerman, D A and W M	Handbook Birds of Cyprus & Migrants of Middle East	1971		
Belcher, C F	The Birds of Nyasaland		24	
Benson, C W	A Check List of the Birds of Nyasaland	1953		
Benson, C W and Benson, F M	The Birds of Malawi	1977		
Benson, C W and White, C M N	A Check List of the Birds of Northern Rhodesia	1957	25	2 copies
Benson, C W; Brooke, R K; Dowsett, R J; Irwin, M P S	The Birds of Zambia	1971		
Berruti, A and Sinclair, J C	Where to Watch Birds in South Africa	1983		
Bishop, I	Thorburn's Mammals	1974		
Bods, J	Birds of the West Indies	1974		
Brook, R K	South African Red Data Book - Birds	1984		
Brook, R K	South African Red Data Book - Ostrich	1985		
Brook, R K	South African Red Data Book - Honeyguide	1986		
Brook, R K	South African Red Data Book - Ibis	1987		
Brown, L	African Birds of Prey	1970		
Brown, L	Birds of Prey : their biology and ecology			
Brown, L and Amadon, D	Eagles, Hawks and Falcons of the World, Vols. 1 and 3	1968	140	
Brown, L H; Urban, E K; Newman, K and many others,	The Birds of Africa, Volumes 1 - 8	1983-2004		
Brown, Leslie	The African Fish Eagle	1980		
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Stott, John	The Birds our Teachers	1999	
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Zimmerman, D A; Turner, D A; Pearson, D J	Birds of Kenya and Northern Tanzania	1996
	Birds of the World - 14 volumes	2000- 2010
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An adult Laughing Dove currently around the house in Newlands, Harare. Despite the malformed upper mandible, it is able to feed normally. Photo I. Riddell
<https://www.inaturalist.org/observations/37363942>



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Eastern Districts: Sue Fenwick 0779-408557 ingram.sue@gmail.com
Mashonaland East Natural History Society: Chairman Peter Hadingham 024-2497035
Secretary: Colin de Beer 0279-23931 jcdb1936@gmail.com
Honeyguide production: vacant

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BirdLife Zimbabwe's membership year is from April to March, but you can join any time.

Even if you don't attend meetings and outings, your membership is really important and supports our goal to protect biodiversity and conserve birds and their habitats through education, lobbying decision-makers and interaction with international organisations.

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Branch Activities

Friends of the Vumba is a community initiative that employs 3 trained scouts to protect the wildlife – tracking for snares and arresting poachers of game, birds and wood. We also support an education outreach into the schools in the area, mostly focussed on birding but more recently extending into wider environmental issues such as WESSA's Water program, rubbish health awareness, alien tree harvesting and indigenous tree planting.

Directions to regular venues (Google Earth co-ordinates):

CABS Northridge Park -17.777494, 31.090782. From town drive along Borrowdale Road, turn right into Whitwell, next right into Ridgeway North, next right into Northend Road and first right into Northridge Close. Drive to the end of the road and go through a security boom into Northridge Park.

Marlborough Vlei -17.742715, 30.990416. Meet at the bottom of Princess Margaret Road, off Harare Drive and follow the road round to the left. Park on the short road midway along the bottom of Princess Margaret.

Mukuvisi Woodlands -17.851935, 31.092010. Turn off the Chiremba Road into Ford Road (opposite Queensdale shops) cross over Longford Avenue and bear left down to the T-junction on Blatherwick Road. Turn right and the gate is about 150 metres on the left. Bring a tip for the car guard. Don't forget refreshments for after the walk when we record the number of species. The **public car park** is off Hillside Road, -17.835393, 31.089111.

Prince Edward School car park -17.818721, 31.036462. Josiah Tongogara Ave.

Monavale Vlei -17.806770, 31.010579. From Quendon Road turn into Lyndhurst Road, at bottom follow right hand bend, take first left and second right to BS Leon roundabout. Second exit is Fenella Drive. Meet on Fenella Drive.

Haka Park -17.843391, 31.143369. From the traffic circle at the Mutare Road/Harare Drive intersection, continue 500m and turn left, follow the road (770m) to the Haka sign and boom on the left. If entering through the boom on Harare Drive (-17.828473, 31.140253; 1.9 km north of the circle) make your way to the meeting point. \$40 entrance fee for BLZ members, \$60 others.

Avondale Sports Club -17.785100, 31.041972. Brighton Road, Harare between Sam Nujoma Street Extension and Upper East Road. There is a cash bar and a security guard. A minimum charge of \$15.00 RTGS per person.

Mashonaland Branch

BirdLife Zimbabwe Mashonaland Calendar of Events: FEBRUARY 2020

Saturday 1st	Marlborough Vlei walk	Meet at 07.00 a.m.
Sunday 2nd	Mukuvisi Woodlands walk	Meet at 06.30 a.m.
Saturday 8th	Crowborough farm Meet at Prince Edward School car park	Meet at 07.00 a.m.
Sunday 16th	Monavale Vlei walk	Meet at 06.30 a.m.
Thursday 20th	Birds of Malta Piet Zwanikken, Avondale Sports Club	Meet 5.30 for 6.00 p.m.
Sunday 23rd	Haka Park	Meet at 06.30 a.m.

BirdLife Zimbabwe Mashonaland Calendar of Events: MARCH 2020

Sunday 1st	Mukuvisi Woodlands walk	Meet at 06.30 a.m.
Saturday 7th	Marlborough Vlei walk	Meet at 07.00 a.m.
Saturday 14th	Harare Botanic Gardens	Meet at 07.00 a.m.
Sunday 15th	Monavale Vlei walk	Meet at 06.30 a.m.
Thursday 19th	Birds & geology Andrew Du Toit, Avondale Sports Club	Meet 5.30 for 6.00 p.m.
Sunday 22nd	Doddington Estates Meet at CABS Northridge Park	Meet at 06.30 a.m.

For further information, please contact Innes Louw, innes.louw@ames.co.zw or hararebirdwalks@gmail.com 0776 190795

Other Areas

Mashonaland West – Margaret Parrock 068-22005 or 0773-263673

Eastern Districts – Second Saturday of every month **The Vumba Walk**. These vary from the Upper to Lower Vumba areas and occasionally may extend into Penhalonga, Burma Valley, and even Chimanimani. Many birding enthusiasts join us although it is not officially a birding walk. They are usually hosted by either a Vumba resident or a commercial venue such as Tony's Coffee Shop, Forest Hills Lodge, White Horse Inn or the Botanical Gardens and the walks will often traverse private properties not always accessible by the public. Contact Sue Fenwick 0779-408557 ingram.sue@gmail.com for more details.

Lowveld – contact Clive Stockil 0772-219204 or clive@chilogorge.com

Are you using the BLZ Mashonaland Calendar of Events on your smartphone?

On your Google account on your computer, click the Google Apps icon (9-dot square) and click **Calendar**. Under My calendars, on the left, tick the box for BLZ Mashonaland Calendar of Events, or try this [link](#).

On your phone go to your calendar – mine is called S Planner – and tap on *More* (yours might say something else but it is your calendar menu) and then *Manage calendars* or whatever yours says. Under Device, the phone, my Samsung has *My calendars* – make sure that is on/ticked, further down it has my Google account – turn on all relevant items and the BLZ Mashonaland Calendar of course. There may be a box/switch to sync your phone with your Google account and this must obviously be on.

Phones and their menus are different but hopefully you can work it out...
...and always have events easily available on your phone.

*Please send contributions for The Babbler 153
Apr-May 2020 any time before the 15th Apr.*