

# THE BABBLER

Newsletter of BirdLife Zimbabwe

June–July 2021 No. 160

A large bird of prey, likely a kestrel or falcon, is perched on a branch. The bird has a light-colored head and neck, a dark eye, and a dark beak. Its body is a mix of light and dark feathers. The background is a clear blue sky.

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# National

## Notice to All Members

Save the Date!

The 40<sup>th</sup> **Annual General Meeting** of BirdLife Zimbabwe will be held at Chishakwe, Save Valley Conservancy at 10 a.m. on Saturday 26 June 2021.

The agenda has been sent via email but is included under **Tail Feathers**, with accommodation options

### International Waterbird Census, Zimbabwe – January 2021 Ian Riddell

46 sites were counted this season (Table 1) and this report is based on returns received by mid-May. The International Waterbird Census preferred count day was in the middle of January but our counts included February, with any additional later counts accepted due to the lower participation caused by COVID restrictions. A new site, Sapi CSU, Zambezi River, is welcomed since there are so few data from the Zambezi Valley these days. Mteri Dam, Chiredzi, was counted but some obligatory data required by Wetlands has not been supplied and the data cannot be entered and the results are not included here.

The water status of sites is shown in Table 1 with a number of sites over-flooded, particularly in Hwange and Matopos, where dams in the Matopos have been dry for many recent counts. Despite the predictions of an over average wet season, rainfall was patchy, some areas being flooded whilst others were below average.

Our Ramsar sites coverage is shown in Table 1. Only Monavale Vlei was covered. Lake

Chivero was not counted and neither was Lake Manyame this season.

Participants are encouraged to count any sudden and significant influx that occurs at any time of the year.

Coverage of our wetland sites relies on the voluntary services of our members and their often-limited resources so grateful thanks are due to the 20 who participated, less than half the number who counted last wet season, plus those simply listed as BLZ. Big thanks to those individuals who undertook extensive coverage in Hwange and other sites.

4 554 birds of 130 species were recorded; this total includes estimates and six unidentified rallids, one unidentified wader, and three unidentified raptors (Table 2). Vultures are also included in this report. Due to over-flooding no birds were counted at Maleme Dam and Mesilume Dam, Matopos, and Tshebetshebe Pan, Hwange.

**Note:** A summary of most species is given below though most single site records (1 record for the season) are only listed in Table 2.

### Anseriformes (Anatidae): ducks and geese

#### White-faced Duck *Dendrocygna viduata*

Ranged from 1-10 (Av. 3.7), then 32 from Ngamo pans.

#### Egyptian Goose *Alopochen aegyptiaca*

A widespread species ranging from 1-100 birds (Av. 159, 31 sites). Counts of >50 were 52 at Crowborough, 69 at Ngamo pans and c.100 on the Zambezi River, A Camp-Chirundu.

#### Spur-winged Goose *Plectropterus gambensis*

Found in low numbers from 1-9 at 12 sites.

#### African Comb Duck *Sarkidiornis melanotos*

From 1-8 at 14 sites, then 12 at Dwarf Goose Pan and 42 at Ngamo Pans, Hwange.

#### Hottentot Teal *Spatula hottentota*

Numbers were low with 2-9 at 8 sites.

#### Red-billed Teal *Anas erythrorhyncha*

1-16 birds (Av. 6.7) plus a higher count of 35 at Scotts Pan, Hwange.

## Podicipediformes (Podicipedidae) grebes

Little Grebe *Tachybaptus ruficollis*

Counts were very low, from 1-8 at 15 sites.

## Pterocliiformes (Pteroclididae) sandgrouse

Burchell's Sandgrouse *Pterocles burchelli*

Only in Hwange with 3 each at Longone Pan and Nyamandhlovu Pan.

## Cuculiformes (Cuculidae) coucals

Senegal Coucal *Centropus senegalensis*  
1 each at Monavale Vlei and Sapi CSU,  
Zambezi River.

Diderick Cuckoo *Chrysococcyx caprius*  
1 at Crowborough and 2 at Monavale Vlei.

## Gruiformes (Heliornithidae-Gruidae) finfoots, flufftails, rails, crakes, cranes

African Finfoot *Podica senegalensis*

1 at Hippo Pools camp.

African Crake *Crecoptis egregia*

1-2 at 8 sites and 11 at Reedbuck Vlei.

Black Crake *Zapornia flavirostra*

From 1-4 at 8 sites.

Common Moorhen *Gallinula chloropus*

Ranged from 1-7 (Av. 3.2) at 13 sites.

Lesser Moorhen *Gallinula angulata*

1-6 at 9 sites plus 11 at Longone Pan.

Red-knobbed Coot *Fulica cristata*

2 at Dwarf Goose Pan and 3 at Big Shumba Pan.



Grey Crowned Crane *Balearica regulorum*

All recorded from Hwange, with 1-31 birds (Av. 11.3), higher counts being 16 each at Big Shumba Pan & Reedbuck Vlei, 17 at Dwarf Goose Pan and 31 at Camp Hwange.

## Ciconiiformes (Ciconiidae) storks

Marabou Stork *Leptoptilos crumenifer*

All were from 6 sites in Hwange. Two small counts of 4 & 7, then 24-35, the highest count from Shumba pumped pan.

Yellow-billed Stork *Mycteria ibis*

1-6 at 4 sites, then 35 at Ngamo Pans.

African Openbill *Anastomus lamelligerus*

2 & 4 at Hwange and Zambezi River, A Camp-Chirundu, then 12-26 at 5 other Hwange sites.

Abdim's Stork *Ciconia abdimii*

12-13 at 3 Hwange sites, then 28 at Crowborough Farm.



African Woollyneck *Ciconia microscelis*

12 at Camp Hwange and 23 at Shumba pumped pan.

White Stork *Ciconia ciconia*

Very poor numbers this season with 5 at Crowborough Farm and 17 at Ngamo Pans.

Saddle-billed Stork *Ephippiorhynchus senegalensis* 1-4 (Av. 2.1) at 9 sites, all found in Hwange and the Zambezi Valley.

### **Pelecaniformes (Threskiornithidae-Pelecanidae) ibises, spoonbills, herons, Hamerkop, pelicans**

African Spoonbill *Platalea alba*  
1-8 (Av. 4.7) at 6 sites.

African Sacred Ibis *Threskiornis aethiopicus*  
Ranged from 1-6 (Av. 2.8) at 5 sites, then 22 at Ngamo Pans and 34 from Crowborough Farm.

Glossy Ibis *Plegadis falcinellus*  
2 at Mandavu Dam and 11 at Ngamo Pans.

Dwarf Bittern *Ixobrychus sturmii*  
1-2 at 4 Hwange sites.

Black-crowned Night-heron *Nycticorax nycticorax*  
1 at Sapi CSU, Zambezi River and 2 on the Zambezi River, A Camp-Chirundu.

Green-backed Heron *Butorides striata*  
From 1-4 birds at 6 sites, then 10 from Zambezi River, A Camp-Chirundu.

Cattle Egret *Bubulcus ibis*  
Low numbers of 1-5 at 6 sites, followed by 50 on the Zambezi River, A Camp-Chirundu, and 280 at Crowborough Farm.

Grey Heron *Ardea cinerea*  
From 1-4 (Av. 2.2) at 16 sites.

Black-headed Heron *Ardea melanocephala*  
1-4 (Av. 1.9) from 9 sites, plus 12 on the Zambezi River, A Camp-Chirundu.

Goliath Heron *Ardea goliath*  
1 on the Zambezi River, A Camp-Chirundu, and 2 at Sapi CSU, Zambezi River.

Purple Heron *Ardea purpurea*  
Singles at 3 sites, then 3 at Sapi CSU, Zambezi River.

Great Egret *Ardea alba*  
1-2 at 3 sites, then 10 on the Zambezi River, A Camp-Chirundu, and 12 at Mandavu Dam.

Yellow-billed Egret *Ardea brachyrhyncha*  
1-5 (Av. 2.1) at 7 sites.

Black Heron *Egretta ardesiaca*  
1 on the Zambezi River, A Camp-Chirundu, 2 at Sapi CSU, Zambezi River.

Little Egret *Egretta garzetta*  
From 1-5 (Av. 1.9) at 10 sites.

Hamerkop *Scopus umbretta*  
Ranged from 1-4 at 10 sites.

### **Suliformes (Phalacrocoracidae-Anhingidae) cormorants and darters**

Reed Cormorant *Microcarbo africanus*  
Small numbers of 1-5 from 6 sites), then 55 on the Zambezi River, A Camp-Chirundu.

White-breasted Cormorant *Phalacrocorax lucidus*  
From 1-2 at 6 sites, which are very low numbers.

African Darter *Anhinga rufa*  
2 at Mandavu Dam, then 6 on the Zambezi River, A Camp-Chirundu.

### **Charadriiformes: thick-knees, avocets & stilts, plovers, jacanas, sandpipers & snipes, coursers, pratincoles, gulls, terns & skimmers**

Water Thick-knee *Burhinus vermiculatus*  
2-4 from 6 sites, then 10 on the Zambezi River, A Camp-Chirundu, which would be a very low count for that section.

Spotted Thick-knee *Burhinus capensis*  
From 3-6 at 3 Hwange sites.

Black-winged Stilt *Himantopus himantopus*  
1-2 from 4 Hwange sites.

Kittlitz's Plover *Charadrius pecuarius*  
1-6 (Av. 2.3) at 9 sites, then 17 at Guvulala Pan (Guvulala).

Three-banded Plover *Charadrius tricollaris*  
1-7 (Av. 2.7) from 10 sites, then 11 at Longone Pan.

White-fronted Plover *Charadrius marginatus*  
1 on the Zambezi River, A Camp-Chirundu, and 7 at Nyamandhlovu Pan.

**Blacksmith Lapwing *Vanellus armatus***

2-13 (Av. 6.9) at 24 sites, 20 & 21 on the Zambezi River, A Camp-Chirundu & Reedbuck Vlei, Hwange, then 50 at Ngamo Pans.

**White-crowned Lapwing *Vanellus albiceps***

2 & 5 were at Camp Hwange & Sapi CSU, Zambezi River, and 30 on the Zambezi River, A Camp-Chirundu.

**Crowned Lapwing *Vanellus coronatus***

1-8 (Av. 3.8) at 4 sites, with 75 at Ngamo Pans.

**Greater Painted-snipe *Rostratula benghalensis***

2-6 (Av. 3.1) at 7 sites.

**African Jacana *Actophilornis africanus***

Numbers ranged from 1-6 (Av. 2.9) at 15 sites, with 16 at Reedbuck Vlei.

**Ruff *Philomachus pugnax***

From 1-18 (Av. 7.9) at 10 sites.

**Little Stint *Calidris minuta***

1 at Masuma Pan/Dam, 4 at Shumba pumped pan and 5 on the Zambezi River, A Camp-Chirundu.

**Common Sandpiper *Actitis hypoleucos***

Low numbers with 1-6 (Av. 2.3) at 12 sites and 10 at Wenimbi Dam.

**Common Greenshank *Tringa nebularia***

1-5 at 7 sites.

**Wood Sandpiper *Tringa glareola***

1-7 (Av. 4) at 16 sites, plus 16 at Ngamo Pans and 25 on the Zambezi River, A Camp-Chirundu.

**Marsh Sandpiper *Tringa stagnatilis***

2 each at 5 sites, plus 8 at Guvulala Pan (Guvulala), all in Hwange.

**Three-banded Courser *Rhinoptilus cinctus***

1-9 (Av. 3.7) at 6 Hwange sites, the 9 at Reedbuck Vlei.

**African Skimmer *Rynchops flavirostris***

5 at Mandavu Dam and 33 on the Zambezi River, A Camp-Chirundu.

**Whiskered Tern *Chlidonias hybrida***

2-12 (Av. 5.9) at 8 Hwange sites.

**White-winged Tern *Chlidonias leucopterus***

2 at Mandavu and 4 on the Zambezi River, A Camp-Chirundu.

**Accipitriformes (Pandionidae-Accipitridae) osprey, kites, hawks, eagles**

**African Fish-eagle *Haliaeetus vocifer***

1-4 at 7 sites and 10 on the Zambezi River, A Camp-Chirundu.

**Yellow-billed Kite *Milvus aegyptius***

4-16 (Av. 8.7) at 9 Hwange sites, the larger numbers being 12 each at Camp Hwange & Reedbuck Vlei, 14 at Makalolo Pan, and 16 at Shumba pumped pan.

**Coraciiformes (Meropidae-Alcedinidae) bee-eaters, kingfishers**

**White-fronted Bee-eater *Merops bullockoides***

3-4 at 3 sites and a surprising 24 at Wenimbi Dam, Marondera.

**Southern Carmine Bee-eater *Merops nubicoides***

5-60 (Av. 26), all from 12 Hwange sites.

**Little Bee-eater *Merops pusillus***

1-6 (Av. 2.6) at 5 sites.

**Malachite Kingfisher *Corythornis cristatus***

Only 1 each from Sapi CSU, Zambezi River and Zambezi River, A Camp-Chirundu.

**Giant Kingfisher *Megaceryle maxima***

1-4 (Av. 1.3) at 4 sites.

**Pied Kingfisher *Ceryle rudis***

1-12 birds (Av. 5.1) from 7 sites, the high count from Zambezi River, A Camp-Chirundu.

**Cisticolas and allies (Cisticolidae)**

**Rattling Cisticola *Cisticola chiniana***

3 on Monavale Vlei and 4 at Crowborough Farm.

**Zitting Cisticola *Cisticola juncidis***

2 on Monavale Vlei and 5 at Crowborough Farm.

**Tawny-flanked Prinia *Prinia subflava***

1 each on Monavale Vlei and Crowborough Farm.

## Swallows and Martins (Hirundinidae)

### Barn Swallow *Hirundo rustica*

1 at Monavale Vlei, 4 at Zambezi River, A Camp-Chirundu and 80 at Crowborough Farm.

## Weavers (Ploceidae)

### Southern Red Bishop *Euplectes orix*

The counts of low numbers in the *Euplectes* spp. below probably reflect the visible males, with variable effort to count females.

Counts from 3-50, though some under counting is likely, especially of females. The

high count was from the Zambezi River, A Camp-Chirundu.

### Southern Masked-weaver *Ploceus velatus*

1 at Mbonisa Weir, Falcon College and 6 at Monavale Vlei.

## Waxbills (Estrildidae)

### Orange-breasted Waxbill *Amandava subflava*

2 at Laggan Dam and 6 at Monavale Vlei.

## Whydahs and Widowfinches (Viduidae)

### Pin-tailed Whydah *Vidua macroura*

2 at Monavale Vlei and 12 at Crowborough Farm.

## Pipits and Wagtails (Motacillidae)

### Yellow-throated Longclaw *Macronyx croceus*

2 each at Laggan Dam and Monavale Vlei.

### African Pied Wagtail *Motacilla aguimp*

1-6 at 3 sites plus 10 at Hippo Pools camp and 13 at Wenimbi Dam.

**Table 1. Sites covered in summer 2021 showing Month (number) and number of counts in brackets (if >1 in same month). Water status: O=over-flooded. Coverage of Ramsar sites and sites within their confines are highlighted.**

Site name	District	Summer	Water
Airstrip 2	Hwange	2	
Balla Balla Pan	Hwange	2	O
Big Shumba Pan	Hwange	1	
Camp Hwange	Hwange	1	
Chitampa Dam	Matopos	2	O
Cobra Pan	Hwange	2	O
Crowborough	Harare	1	D
Davison Pan, (Ostrich)	Hwange	2	O
Dwarf Goose Pan	Hwange	1	
Guvulala Pan (Guvalala)	Hwange	2	O
Gwenga gate pan	Hwange	2	O
Hippo Pools	Shamva	2	O
HwaHwadu Pan	Hwange	2	
Laggan Dam	Marondera	1	O
Little Makalolo Pan	Hwange	2	
Little Somavundhla	Hwange	2	O
Longone Pan	Hwange	2	O
Madingazulu Dam	Matopos	1	O
Madison Pan	Hwange	2	
Major Pan	Hwange	2	O
Makalolo Pan	Hwange	2	O

Site name	District	Summer	Water
Maleme Dam	Matopos	1	○
Mandavu Dam	Hwange	1	
Masuma Pan/Dam	Hwange	1	
Mbonisa Weir	Umzingwane	2	
Mesilume Dam	Matopos	1	○
Monavale Vlei	Harare	1	
Mpopoma Dam	Matopos	2	○
Ngamo Pans	Hwange	2	○
Ngwenya Pans	Hwange	2	○
Ngweshla Pans	Hwange	2	○
Nyamandhlovu Pan	Hwange	2 (2)	○
Pans 2-3 km NE of Makalolo Pan, Hwange (Back Pan)	Hwange	2	○
Reedbuck Vlei	Hwange	1	
Sandy Spruit Dam	Matopos	1, 2	○
Sapi CSU, Zambezi River	Hurungwe	1	
Scotts Pan	Hwange	2	○
Shumba Pans	Hwange	1	
Shumba pumped pan	Hwange	1	
Somavundhla Pans	Hwange	2	○
Three Pans	Hwange	2	
Tshebetshebe Pan	Hwange	2	○
Wenimbi Dam	Marondera	2	○
Wexcau Pan	Hwange	2	
Whitewaters Dam	Matopos	2	○
Zambezi River, A Camp-Chirundu	Hurungwe	1	○

**Table 2. Species totals, including recounts, in the summer season of 2021. The number of sites (including sub-sites) in brackets. Single site records, not mentioned above, are given here.**

Species	Summer	Single site
Abdim's Stork	65 (4)	
African Comb Duck	106 (16)	
African Crake	23 (9)	
African Darter	11 (2)	
African Finfoot	1 (1)	Hippo Pools camp
African Fish-eagle	22 (8)	
African Harrier-hawk	1 (1)	Guvulala Pan (Guvulala)
African Jacana	59 (16)	
African Openbill	100 (7)	
African Pied Wagtail	32 (5)	
African Pipit	9 (1)	Crowborough Farm
African Reed-warbler	2 (1)	Monavale Vlei
African Sacred Ibis	70 (7)	
African Skimmer	38 (2)	
African Spoonbill	28 (6)	
African Stonechat	1 (1)	Monavale Vlei
African Woollyneck	111 (8)	
Barn Swallow	85 (3)	
Black Coucal	2 (1)	Monavale Vlei
Black Crake	18 (8)	
Black Heron	3 (2)	



Species	Summer	Single site
Black-crowned Night-heron	3 (2)	
Black-headed Heron	29 (10)	
Blacksmith Lapwing	256 (27)	
Black-winged Stilt	6 (4)	
Blue-cheeked Bee-eater	60 (1)	Zambezi River, A Camp-Chirundu
Bronze-winged Courser	5 (1)	Dwarf Goose Pan
Brown-throated Martin	4 (1)	Zambezi River, A Camp-Chirundu
Burchell's Sandgrouse	6 (2)	
Cattle Egret	346 (8)	
Collared Pratincole	2 (1)	Mandavu Dam
Common Greenshank	18 (7)	
Common Moorhen	41 (13)	
Common Ringed Plover	6 (1)	Zambezi River, A Camp-Chirundu
Common Sandpiper	40 (13)	
Corn Crake	1 (1)	Camp Hwange
Croaking Cisticola	3 (1)	Monavale Vlei
Crowned Lapwing	90 (5)	
Diderick Cuckoo	3 (2)	
Double-banded Sandgrouse	2 (1)	Nyamandhlovu Pan
Dwarf Bittern	5 (4)	
Egyptian Goose	493 (31)	
European Bee-eater	2 (1)	Monavale Vlei
Giant Kingfisher	9 (4)	
Glossy Ibis	13 (2)	
Goliath Heron	3 (2)	
Great Egret	26 (5)	
Great Reed-warbler	1 (1)	Monavale Vlei
Greater Painted-snipe	22 (7)	
Green-backed Heron	22 (7)	
Grey Crowned Crane	102 (9)	
Grey Heron	35 (16)	
Grey-rumped Swallow	5 (1)	Monavale Vlei
Hadedda Ibis	1 (1)	Sapi CSU, Zambezi River
Half-collared Kingfisher	3 (1)	Hippo Pools camp
Hamerkop	17 (10)	
Hooded Vulture	9 (1)	Guvulala Pan (Guvulala)
Horus Swift	6 (1)	Mbonisa Weir, Falcon College
Hottentot Teal	39 (8)	
Kittlitz's Plover	40 (10)	
Kurrichane Buttonquail	3 (1)	Monavale Vlei
Lappet-faced Vulture	2 (1)	Guvulala Pan (Guvulala)
Lesser Moorhen	36 (10)	
Lesser Swamp-warbler	1 (1)	Monavale Vlei
Levaillant's Cisticola	2 (1)	Monavale Vlei
Little Bee-eater	13 (5)	
Little Egret	19 (10)	
Little Grebe	45 (15)	
Little Rush-warbler	20 (1)	Zambezi River, A Camp-Chirundu
Little Stint	10 (3)	
Long-crested Eagle	1 (1)	Crowborough Farm
Malachite Kingfisher	2 (2)	
Marabou Stork	122 (6)	
Marsh Sandpiper	14 (4)	

Species	Summer	Single site
Orange-breasted Waxbill	8 (2)	
Pale-crowned Cisticola	1 (1)	Monavale Vlei
Peregrine Falcon	2 (1)	Laggan Dam
Pied Kingfisher	36 (7)	
Pin-tailed Whydah	14 (2)	
Purple Heron	6 (4)	
Rattling Cisticola	7 (2)	
Red-billed Teal	203 (24)	
Red-breasted Swallow	2 (1)	Crowborough Farm
Red-chested Cuckoo	1 (1)	Monavale Vlei
Red-collared Widowbird	14 (1)	Monavale Vlei
Red-faced Cisticola	3 (1)	Monavale Vlei
Red-knobbed Coot	5 (2)	
Reed Cormorant	68 (7)	
Ruff	87 (10)	
Saddle-billed Stork	19 (9)	
Senegal Coucal	2 (2)	
Southern Carmine Bee-eater	311 (12)	
Southern Masked-weaver	7 (2)	
Southern Red Bishop	122 (6)	
Spotted Thick-knee	14 (3)	
Spur-winged Goose	51 (12)	
Squacco Heron	2 (1)	Sapi CSU, Zambezi River
Streaky-breasted Flufftail	10 (1)	Monavale Vlei
Tawny Eagle	1 (1)	Guvulala Pan (Guvulala)
Tawny-flanked Prinia	2 (2)	
Temminck's Courser	2 (1)	Camp Hwange
Three-banded Courser	22 (6)	
Three-banded Plover	38 (11)	
unidentified rallids - Rallidae	6 (1)	Big Shumba Pan
unidentified raptors	3 (2)	Big Shumba Pan, Laggan Dam
unidentified waders	1 (1)	Sapi CSU, Zambezi River
Water Thick-knee	29 (8)	
Wattled Crane	1 (1)	Ngamo Pans
Whiskered Tern	47 (8)	
White Stork	22 (2)	
White-backed Night-heron	2 (1)	Hippo Pools camp
White-backed Vulture	43 (1)	Guvulala Pan (Guvulala)
White-breasted Cormorant	7 (6)	
White-browed Coucal	2 (1)	Sapi CSU, Zambezi River
White-crowned Lapwing	37 (3)	
White-faced Duck	102 (19)	
White-fronted Bee-eater	35 (4)	
White-fronted Plover	8 (2)	
White-headed Vulture	5 (1)	Guvulala Pan (Guvulala)
White-winged Tern	6 (2)	
Wood Sandpiper	105 (18)	
Woodland Kingfisher	2 (1)	Sapi CSU, Zambezi River
Yellow Bishop	2 (1)	Monavale Vlei
Yellow-billed Egret	15 (7)	
Yellow-billed Kite	78 (9)	
Yellow-billed Stork	46 (5)	
Yellow-crowned Bishop	1 (1)	Mandavu Dam

Species	Summer	Single site
Yellow-mantled Widowbird	30 (1)	Monavale Vlei
Yellow-throated Longclaw	4 (2)	
Zitting Cisticola	7 (2)	

### Participants

Jenny Brebner, John Brebner, J Brown, J Hunt, Stephen Long, Sue Long, I Louw, G Macdonald, H Macdonald, H Matthews, J Matthews, T Ndadziira, S Nkomo, D Nyoni, R Rees, I Riddell, C Savage, P Solomon, A Tshipa, T Zondo, other BLZ members.

## Branch News

### Mashonaland

## Bird outings around and about Harare

Ken Dixon, Patrick Shadwell & Ian Riddell

### Komani, Sunday 28<sup>th</sup> March 2021

Departure from town was delayed as Prince Edward was closed due to a Covid outbreak, forcing us to find alternative parking. Hence, we arrived at Komani late and failed to meet up with the other two groups. In fact, we only ever found one, and that at the end of the morning, having tea with Linda and Adam Selby on their delightful verandah. The farm, though now reduced to 350ha from the original 1600ha, is still big enough to lose oneself on. We noted many changes from our last visit; a huge state of the art vegetable packing shed being the most obvious, made necessary by the production of peas, soya, and masses of blueberries for export to Europe. It is good for us as environmentalists to know that operations are being directed where possible according to Alan Savory's principles for sustainable farming.

Having failed to rendezvous with John and the youth group, we 4 made for marshy but now almost dry grassland in front of the light aircraft club on the opposite bank of the Gwebi. Within minutes we had found Cape Longclaw, Rosy-throated Longclaw, Yellow-throated Longclaw, African Quailfinch, Red-billed Teal, African Sacred Ibis, Pin-tailed Whydah, Black-headed Heron and a Black Coucal. European Bee-eaters were calling overhead and African Wattled Lapwing and Swainson's Spurfowl on the ground. Richard and Patrick set off for the river while Lawrence and I stayed closer to the

hangars. I was lucky to flush a Marsh Owl, so silent and graceful. A Common Fiscal and more Yellow-throated Longclaws sat on the bushes and Croaking Cisticola called from the thick grass. On returning to our vehicle Lawrence and I found the resident pair of Lanner Falcon sitting in an acacia, occasionally making hunting sorties and spending much time close together on the runway. R and P's foray produced Cattle Egret, Great Reed-warbler, African Snipe and lots of cisticola.

Back at the farm, we set off along a fence, hoping to find a way into the miombo woodland, but this was unsuccessful and there weren't many birds on the blueberry and pea and bean fields. On the woodland fringe we saw Yellow-fronted Canary, Grey Penduline-tit, Red-billed Firefinch and Blue Waxbill, Marsh Warbler and others. High up was a Black-chested Snake-eagle with some late Common House-martins.

Eventually, with the help of modern technology, we joined up with John and his group on the verandah and were warmly welcomed by our generous hosts. At the call it became obvious that they with their young, sharp eyes and ears had seen as many species as we had, notable among these were European Honey-buzzard, Lizard Buzzard and Steppe Buzzard, Wahlberg's Eagle, Amur Falcon and Gabar Goshawk, widowbirds, a late Willow

Warbler, African Pipit and Buffy Pipit and countless others, making a respectable total of 101 species.

We would like to thank the Selby family sincerely for allowing us unhindered, except for

fences, access to their impressive operation and wish them great success.

Ken Dixon

## **BOTANIC GARDENS, HARARE, Saturday 10<sup>th</sup> April 2021**

How good it is to see the enthusiasm and witness the skills of BLZ's new youth wing! A dozen of them brought colour and fun to our walk and, at the end, the addition of many species not seen by others. We were glad also to welcome new members, and less regular walkers including Sue. It was Sue and her late husband that encouraged the manager to establish the new paths that joined up the main garden with the Borrowdale Road area and allowing access to the hill.

On setting out we were excited to see a Little Sparrowhawk attack a flock of Green Woodhoopoes, while an African Goshawk circled high above with the swifts. Less dramatic from then on but all the common residents appeared; Variable Sunbird, Miombo Double-collared Sunbird, Amethyst Sunbird and White-bellied Sunbird, waxbills, bulbuls, barbets and doves. Up towards the reservoir, a family of Black-throated Wattle-eyes could be heard in a dense

bush but were difficult to see. Whilst attempting to track them, several people caught a fleeting glimpse of a Common Whitethroat before it too disappeared into the thicket.

Other less common species were Tambourine Dove, Steel-blue Widowfinch and Black Sparrowhawk. Back down by the "lake", high in a big Mahogany, was a flock of Red-billed Quelea, Streaky-headed Seedeaters and Brimstone Canary. Foraging on the ground below them were Black-throated Canary, weavers, sparrows and firefinches. A Lesser Honeyguide's presence was betrayed by the flash of his white tail feathers as he moved from tree to tree before he settled for a drink in a puddle, offering great views for the birders.

Our final count from the 4 or 5 groups that set out in different directions was 64, not bad for April and there was lots of badly needed socialising after a long lockdown.

Ken Dixon

## **MONVALE VLEI, Sunday 18<sup>th</sup> April 2021**

This was the last of our 0630 starts as winter approaches and it was very cool but calm. The bishops and widowbirds are losing or have lost their breeding plumage and the Grey-rumped Swallow, for example, has replaced the Barn Swallow. The vleis now is hard and dry except where the broken pipes provide wet patches. The grass, reeds and flowers are still very tall. In fact we were grateful that Duncan was back from Tanzania and tall enough to have a good view of the surrounding vleis to report on what

he could see. All the resident cisticola like Zitting Cisticola, Rattling Cisticola, Levillant's Cisticola and Croaking Cisticola were present, as were Lesser Swamp-warbler, Little Rush-warbler and African Reed-warbler. The Long-crested Eagle sat in a gum and the resident Black-shouldered Kite flew over.

In all we counted about 50 species which is respectable for the April walk.

Ken Dixon

## **Croc farm at Mazvikadei, Sunday 25<sup>th</sup> April 2021, pentad 1710\_3020**

Post lockdown many birders must be feeling the need to get out of town. Despite the 100km drive, we were a group of 20+ for this fascinating venue, where we ticked over 75 species. It was good to have residents Bev and Tim Morgan among the Hararian visitors for local knowledge.

It is difficult to have an overview of the birding as we split into 4 or 5 small groups to explore the venue and the crocodiles themselves were a distraction often demanding our attention. There are many ponds, all containing a certain group of crocs from the enormous stud members to the youngsters, who all dived

noisily into the water when we approached. Most however slept peacefully on as we passed.



**Southern Banded Groundling with an extra eye on the viewers**

Birdwise, the absence of waterbirds, apart from Pied Kingfishers and Malachite Kingfishers and an African Fish-eagle, was puzzling. Ponds where we normally see gallinule and jacana, etc. were relatively quiet, though African Purple Swamphen was there and a number of Green-backed Herons. Have the crocs frightened them off or eaten them? There were, however, plenty of birds in the abundant dense vegetation around the ponds. For me the most exciting sightings were a Yellow-breasted Apalis and a Cut-throat Finch, neither of which I have seen for a long time. Black-throated Wattle-eyes were a nice find and, unexpectedly, a Red-faced Crombec appeared briefly in the same tree. A mystery brown eagle was with soaring Lizard Buzzards and it could have been a juvenile Black-chested Snake-eagle or African Hawk-eagle.



**No shortage of impressive crocs!**

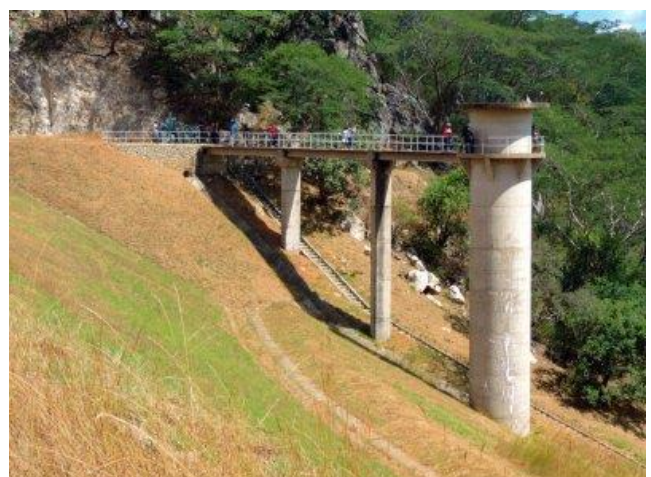
Other noteworthy sightings included several Trumpeter Hornbills, Meyer's Parrots, Common

Scimitarbills, White-browed Robin-chats with suspiciously Red-capped Robin-Chat-like calls, and Grey Tit-flycatchers. There were numerous bush-shrikes, waxbills, doves, warblers, sunbirds and weavers, including many Thick-billed Weavers feeding youngsters.



**Exciting to see nesting African Darters, now locally extinct from Harare due to rampant netting of dams**

Heartening to see amongst a Reed Cormorant colony with over 200 birds were 4 nests of African Darters. They were disturbed briefly by a determined Lanner Falcon looking for breakfast, but after several fruitless attempts and lots of noise the falcon left unsated. A White-browed Coucal was heard briefly and a pair of African Pied Wagtails made an appearance as we gathered together at the end of the walk after a lovely morning in beautiful surrounds.



Many of those in attendance decided to visit the dam wall briefly to explore the hills alongside it, and to enjoy a view of the dam, though few birds were seen as it was fairly hot by then. However, the different habitat added a Black Stork, Emerald-spotted Wood-dove, Speckled Pigeon, lots of Cinnamon-breasted Buntings, a Brown Snake-eagle, Little Swifts and

Bearded Woodpecker, amongst others. Much interest was created by a Stripe-bellied Sand Snake. Many, many thanks to our gracious hosts and to Innes for organising such a lovely outing! We wish him and Rihanna all the best in future and hope it all goes well for them in their move.

Patrick Shadwell, photos Ian Riddell



## Mashonaland East

*Mashonaland East Natural History Society MARONDERA  
March/April 2021 Newsletter*

We finally held our 26<sup>th</sup> AGM on Saturday 21 March out at Rakodze, which was hosted by Jen Mitchell. It is such a lovely place to have an AGM. With the dam at the bottom of the huge garden, there is always a variety of birds to see. Well done and thank you to all the members who attended. 15 members attended the meeting and there were 6 apologies. Well done to Sue on bringing some of the more senior members out. I think Alison Davidson was one of the founder members and a knowledgeable birder in her day.

The AGM was preceded by a 90-minute bird walk where we counted 35 different bird species. A section of the walk was a rather difficult where we walked below one of the tobacco fields. The ladies impressed with their endurance and never gave up. They continue to amaze me.

Peter Hadingham, the Chairman, proposed that we consider carrying the committee forward for another year and this was duly accepted. He reminded members that we were a natural history society and should consider holding a meeting devoted not to birds alone but some other aspect of natural history. I have noticed that on some of the bird walks some of the ladies gather around a shrub or flower and appear to be deep in discussion. I always thought they were just having a rest, but they are actually discussing the flower or plant and the odd scientific name gets bandied about.

We had held 11 walks during the year plus a 3-day outing to Connemara.

The table below summarises the sightings and total number of different bird species counted at each venue.

Venue	Visits	Bird Species (cum total)	Av.	Different Species
Gosho Park	2	47	23.5	39
Borradaile Trust	5	148	29.5	56
Rakodze	2	96	48	67
Imire	1	28	28	28
Kushinga Phikelela	1	39	39	39

From the above Rakodze appears to be our most productive local venue. This is not surprising as it has the benefit of hosting several waterbirds thanks to the dam. We have never had much success at Gosho Park but during the period referenced both Roger MacDonald and Derek Adams had good sightings that included the Spotted Creeper, a species that seems to elude us.

At the beginning of March a juvenile African Goshawk was seen under a mulberry tree in the Trust grounds. Sue and I visited it regularly and noted that the mother brought it food every morning. We were told that it had been seen in a nearby tree in the same area of the Trust and we assumed it could now fly. Sadly, one morning we found it dead outside the kitchen window at the Close. One of the maids said it

had flown into the window. This seemed doubtful as it had a gaping wound in the chest that was infected with maggots. One day, while following up on the Goshawk's progress, we came across a Barn Owl perched very low in a tree. A few days later I was inspecting our guava crop and looked up to see the owl peering down at me. The owl flew off and we have not seen it since. Our neighbour did say it had been a regular visitor to her garden.



Pete and Phyllis Banks and Sue and myself went out to Rufaro Dam one afternoon to look for a suitable birding venue. Sadly, we saw nothing bar a lone Common Fiscal. There were no waterbirds and no birds near the dam. It was good to see the dam spilling. The spillway is inside the dam and the outlet is at the end of a quite a long pipeline into the waterway below the dam. Apparently, the children had a lot of fun in days gone by when they slid down the pipeline from the spillway inlet to the outlet.

We followed this up a week later to Wenimbi Dam. We went to the Meikles' farm to a lovely platform overlooking the river flowing into Wenimbi. We had a short walk and again the birding was not too good. We did see a Swainson's Spurfowl plus a dozen or so other species. It could be a nice venue on a better day.

We had 10 members at our outing to Mushandi Farm on 11 April. We were well looked after by Wendy and Dave Dolphin. After morning coffee we went on a short walk to the dam. In all we saw 38 different species of bird.



Unfortunately, we did not get to see the Black Coucal, which Dave said he sees just about every day on his drives around the farm. We did get take home a punnet of strawberries each, which was most appreciated.

The Amur Falcons that Malcolm Moodie and I always look for on our trips to Harare have left. The few Abdim's Storks, which have for the past few months been residing in the Trust grounds near Frail Care have moved on. A pair of Groundscraper Thrush can be seen near the bowling green. One or two residents have seen the African Hoopoe but there are no further reports since the last bit of rain fell. The Spotted Eagle-owl seem to be here for a short time before they disappear. Perhaps the resident troop of monkeys we have are chasing them away. Sue and I have seen the Whyte's Barbet a few times in our garden. I still cannot attract the Black-collared Barbet into our garden. The Levillant's Cuckoo is occasionally seen, usually near the Arrow-marked Babbler.

Louis Jacobsz and Mary Buckle continue their efforts in increasing the size of the resident Helmeted Guineafowl flock. Jo Denton said her daughter and son-in-law had successfully nursed and release a Verreaux's Eagle-owl that they found under their trampoline.

Our avid group of birders still refer to birds by their old names. The White-browed Robin-chat remains a Heuglin's Robin and the Purple-crested Turaco is still a Purple-crested Lourie. There are a few others in this category. I recently read an article on bird name changes, which I found rather interesting. The Hottentot Teal is now called the Blue-billed Teal and the Hottentot Buttonquail is now known as the Fynbos Buttonquail. It seems that the word "Hottentot" is no longer appropriate. Whilst the names of those two birds have been changed, both their Latin binomials include the word "hottentot." There could be a call in the future to change the names of the Verreaux's Eagle (Black Eagle) and the Verreaux's Eagle-owl (Giant Eagle-Owl) as these were possibly named after Edouard Verreaux, a grave robbing collector in the 18<sup>th</sup> Century.

It was interesting to see a few African Green-pigeons in a Hawthorn tree close to our garden eating the red berries. We believe that the berries have ripened sooner than last year and

were wondering who was going to tell the pigeons. It was quite amazing as a few days later the pigeons were feeding on the berries.

**Gez Bester**

## Mashonaland West

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How lovely to feel the cool autumn weather with warm, sunny days. Our avian friends are round and about again, feeding and singing. Birds somehow capture our appreciation, the colour, shape, behaviour and calls forever interest us.

### *27<sup>th</sup> March*

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7 a.m. –sunny but wet Rio area vlei pan. There was lots of water about but this pan with water lilies and grasses had food.

40+ African Sacred Ibis, 2 adult Grey Herons and 1 juvenile, 1 African Spoonbill, all wading and feeding. In the grassland and thornbush surrounding – a Senegal Coucal pair, 1 Long-tailed Paradise-whydah, a Fork-tailed Drongo pair, Zitting Cisticola, Rattling Cisticola, Rufous-naped Lark, Chestnut-vented Tit-babbler, 7 Red-faced Mousebirds & Swainson's Spurfowl. Total 18 species.

At 9 a.m., we proceeded to Martin dye ponds. The water levels are high so only 4 Wood Sandpipers, 2 Black-winged Stilts, 10 White-faced Duck, 8 Red-billed Teal and 2 Blacksmith Lapwings. The Martin dam, beyond the ponds and compound, was full and water overflowing. 56 Reed Cormorants on various shallow islands, 2 Pied Kingfishers and 1 Giant Kingfisher, 1 Green-backed Heron, 1 Hamerkop, 1 African Fish-eagle and 1 Grey Heron. The surrounding woodland was lush and dense. 5 White-crested Helmet-shrikes, many various sunbirds. Total 20.

### *10<sup>th</sup> April*

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7 a.m., Charama sunny with a fresh wind blowing across the dam and vlei. 30+ Helmeted Guineafowl of various sizes enjoying the roadside stroll, a pair of African Golden Orioles (calling), 1 pair Broad-billed Roller (calling). 1 Hamerkop at the dam. 18 woodland species.

We proceeded to Pasi dam and could hardly park the vehicle, the water high and into the

woodland area. 11 White-crested Helmet-shrike, 2 Pied Kingfisher, 1 pair African Wattled Lapwings, Southern Black Tit, 1 Long-tailed Paradise-whydah, 3 Namaqua Doves (2 males, 1 female).

### *17<sup>th</sup> April*

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7 a.m., cold, cloudy, windy day to Pasi and Devon dams.

We proceeded along Pasi road through mixed woodland. 5 Violet-backed Starlings (4 males, 1 female), Southern Black Flycatcher, Cape Turtle-dove and Emerald-spotted Wood-dove, Brubru, Black-backed Puffback, Tropical Boubou, Orange-breasted Bush-shrike, seen and heard calls. A pair of African Grey Hornbills with their undulating flight.

At Devon dam, 2 Green-backed Heron, 5 African Jacana, 1 African Fish-eagle, 13 White-faced Duck, 5 White-fronted Bee-eaters (seem to be resident), sunbirds, White-bellied Sunbird, Scarlet-chested Sunbird, Marico Sunbird (male + female) all active, nectar-feeding off bushes, trees, shrubs, climbers. 1 female Bearded Woodpecker.

### *1<sup>st</sup> May*

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7 a.m., clouds rolling past, rain previous night so a wet morning. Balclutha farm near Gadzema.

We stopped in the woodland area and the road had many puddles with clean water for animals. Swainson's Spurfowl, Black-crowned Tchagra, 6-8 Arrow-marked Babblers, Southern Black Tit, White-bellied Sunbird and Scarlet-chested Sunbird, Black-collared Barbet and Crested Barbet, Yellow Bishop (f), 2 calling Lizard Buzzards, 10 Miombo Blue-eared Starlings, 4 African Grey Hornbills, 1 Greater Honeyguide, 5 White-crested Helmet-shrikes plus 18 other species.

We proceeded to the big dam, passing through harvested maize fields. An unknown



birdcall stopped us. After much searching, we located a group of 5+ African Quailfinch with their distinct white facial markings, hopping about the dry area feeding.

At the dam, only some woodland species. Yellow-bellied Greenbul, Yellow-fronted Canary, Bar-throated Apalis, Common Waxbill, Red-billed Firefinch and Yellow-throated Longclaw in the grassland.

### 8<sup>th</sup> May

7 a.m. to Whitehead ponds. A sunny day but cool wind across the ponds. The first pond has fresh, clean water surrounded by green grass; 3 Little Grebes. Further on to the next pond, winter is receding; 7 Blacksmith Lapwings, 1 Glossy Ibis, a pair of Egyptian Goose, 1 Grey Heron, 1 pair Three-banded Plovers, 13 Kittlitz's Plovers, 51 Black-winged Stilts, 4 Red-billed Teal, 5 White-faced Duck, 3 Wood Sandpipers.

Outside the ponds are grassland, maize fields, and the odd tree. 1 Magpie Shrike, a pair of Namaqua Doves plus 3 more, Zitting Cisticola Rattling Cisticola and Red-faced Cisticola, 26+ Orange-breasted Waxbills, 1 Lilac-breasted Roller, Cape Turtle-dove and Laughing Dove.

The highlight was the male Marico Sunbird voraciously feeding all off the upright *Leonotis* plant, his plumage glistening in the sunshine.

At 10 a.m., we proceeded to the Chigwell estate, halfway back to Kadoma. We acknowledged our visit to the farmer. We drove alongside maize fields and grassland then stopped for tea in lovely mixed woodland. Birds are curious and we soon had visitors. Fork-tailed Drongo, Emerald-spotted Wood-dove and Cape Turtle-dove, Black-collared Barbet, Red-faced Mousebirds and Brown-hooded Kingfisher. At the dam, which has natural rounded boulders all about and in the water, 3 African Sacred Ibis, 2 Pied Kingfishers, 2 Three-banded Plovers, 30+ White-faced Ducks, a pair of Egyptian Goose, 2 African Wattled Lapwings and 1 Malachite Kingfisher.

Whenever we travel, we stay open-minded and are always greeted with happy, friendly, smiling people. The rural people are curious to know our interest in birds and our environment, so we are able to explain as birdlife representatives.

**Margaret Parrock *et al.***

## **African Bird Club**

**is featuring Zimbabwe for their talk on Tuesday 15 June 2021 starting at 6 p.m. UK time or 7 p.m. CAT (Zimbabwe time)**

Togarasei Fakarayi (BirdLife Zimbabwe) will be presenting on:  
“Advancing bird and biodiversity conservation in IBAs/KBAs through local engagement and empowerment in Zimbabwe”

Followed by BLZ supported African Bird Club grantees:

Abigail Karimanzira on “The state of Lilian’s Lovebirds (*Agapornis lilianae*) in Mana Pools National Park, Zimbabwe”

Shingirai Sakarombe on “Conservation status of Blue Swallows in Nyanga IBA and the surrounding areas, Zimbabwe”

See below for the link:

Register in advance for this meeting:

<https://us02web.zoom.us/meeting/register/tZwuf-mqzMrGN0iq3TWCP8FwQWOMYZf1ZZO>

After registering, you will receive a confirmation email containing information about joining the meeting.



## **AGENDA**

1. Apologies
2. Confirmation of the Minutes of the AGM held on 27 June 2020
3. Matters Arising from the Minutes
4. President's Report
5. Treasurer's report
6. The CEO's Report, Research and Conservation Reports, Bird Club Reports, Water bird Counts & SABAP2 Bird Atlassing Project Reports below. These will be taken as read. The CEO, Conservation and Finance staff will be available for questions.
7. Election of Officers

The venue for the 2021 BLZ AGM will be CHISHAKWE in Save Valley Conservancy  
[www.chishakwesafaris.com](http://www.chishakwesafaris.com)

The programme over the AGM will look like the following:

- Day 1 Friday: Arrival in the afternoon. Settle into accommodation/set up camp. Braai in the evening for all
- Day 2: Saturday: Early morning bird walk/drive. Return to camp for breakfast/brunch. 10 a.m. AGM with guest presentations. Evening braai.
- Day 3: Sunday: Early morning bird walk/drive. Return to camp for breakfast/brunch. Departure

### **Chishakwe accommodation breakdown is as follows:**

All costs are per person per day and do not include guided activities.

Hunters House: (Normal cost 40USD per person, BirdLife cost 35)

1 x bedroom with King-size beds (can easily fit another two single beds on its veranda area). Ensuite bathroom.

1 x bedroom with King-size bed. Shared bathroom.

2 x bedrooms with 2 single beds. Shared bathroom.

1 x bedroom with 3 single beds. Ensuite bathroom.

Fully furnished and equipped. Serviced daily.

Ranch House: (Normal cost 40 USD per person, BirdLife cost 35)

1 x bedroom with king-size bed (adjoining bathroom)

3 x bedrooms with single beds (shared bathroom)

1 x bedroom with single beds (ensuite bedroom) Fully furnished and equipped.  
Serviced daily.

Stone Cottage (Normal cost 40 USD per person, BirdLife cost 35)

1 x bedroom with 2 single beds

Sitting/ dining area, bathroom and own little veranda.

Fully furnished and equipped. Serviced daily.

Stable Block (Normal cost of 25USD per person, BirdLife cost of 20 per person)

6 x stables with 2 bunk beds in each and loo, basin ensuite. Recommended to put two per stable but can push to 4.

Outdoor braai and fireside seating area.

Bring own bedding.

Camping (10 USD per person)

We do not have a campsite or usually offer camping as an option but in this instance will offer space in any of the gardens or in the area near the Stable Block to those who wish to camp. They will be sharing ablutions with the house or Stable Block occupants.

River Camp (USD 95 per person)

5 x chalets with 2 x 3/4 size beds in each.

Includes 3 meals, teas, coffees and cordials.

Note that River Camp is secluded and is a few kilometres away from the Devuli HQ area where all the other accommodation is situated.

For further info regarding the accommodation and to book, please contact Lisa Jane Campbell (lisajane.campbell@gmail.com)

We look forward to catching up with you in Chishakwe over the 2021 AGM!

## Useful Contacts:

CEO/Ringing Programme: Julia Pierini [JuliaPierini@birdlifezimbabwe.org](mailto:JuliaPierini@birdlifezimbabwe.org) 0772-894562  
Rarities Committee: Ian Riddell [gemsaf@mango.zw](mailto:gemsaf@mango.zw) 0772-117054  
BLZ Library: [piumosso@zol.co.zw](mailto:piumosso@zol.co.zw) 2304298; 2481496  
Special Species: Peta Ditchburn [specialspecies@blz.co.zw](mailto:specialspecies@blz.co.zw) 0775-940714, 029-2230075  
Mashonaland South: Margaret Parrock 068-22005 or her daughter Coralee 0772-739370  
Eastern Districts: Sue Fenwick 0779-408557 [ingram.sue@gmail.com](mailto:ingram.sue@gmail.com)  
Mashonaland East Natural History Society: Chairman Peter Hadingham 024-2497035  
Secretary: Gez Bester [ges.bester@gmail.com](mailto:ges.bester@gmail.com)  
*Honeyguide* production: vacant

## BLZ MEMBERSHIP

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.

In addition, your involvement with data collection through atlassing and submission of records is invaluable. As a member you get the newsletter, *The Babbler*, every two months and two issues of *Honeyguide*, our internationally acclaimed journal, every membership year. All for a very reasonable annual fee.

Especially in these difficult economic times, donations towards any of our projects are always much appreciated and you may consider mentioning BLZ in your will!

Due to the instability of the local currency at present, subs are listed in USD, but may be paid in Zimbabwe Dollars at the Bank Rate on the day

Students	1.00
Youth Club Members (Unemployed)	1.00
Youth Club Members	5.00
Individual/Family members (incl. children under 17)	15.00
Pensioners (65 & over)	10.00
Schools (Government)	10.00
Schools (private), Educational Institutions	50.00
Rest of Africa (payable in forex)	40.00
Rest of World (payable in forex)	50.00
Corporate members	*100.00

\* If you would like recognition on our public forums, choose the \$200 Corporate Plan. To learn more about corporate sponsorship and BLZ projects, write to [JuliaPierini@birdlifezimbabwe.org](mailto:JuliaPierini@birdlifezimbabwe.org)

**Payment details.** Please deposit into BirdLife Zimbabwe account at **NMB Bank, (Borrowdale Branch) Account No: 260092014** or BirdLife Zimbabwe Mashonaland Branch, CABS (Chisipite Branch) Account No: 1002399955 or **Ecocash** – Merchant Code No. **22084**. You can **also** pay your subscription online with **Paynow**. Look on the BLZ website on the membership page [www.birdlifezimbabwe.org/joinus](http://www.birdlifezimbabwe.org/joinus), and click on the Paynow tab at the bottom of the page. This is especially important for our members outside Zimbabwe. You could **also** come to our office at 35, Clyde Road, Eastlea in Harare.

Some members are not informing us when they pay their subscription and when members deposit into the banks, the name shown on the statement is often only the first name and therefore we may not know who you are.

Therefore, it is **ESSENTIAL** please that you advise us by e-mail of your transaction, or your payment will not be recorded. Please notify Sylvia [sylvia@blz.co.zw](mailto:sylvia@blz.co.zw) phone 024-2481496 and Paula Dell [paula.dell@strachansphoto.com](mailto:paula.dell@strachansphoto.com) when you have made your payments – and for all membership-related issues – new, renewals, payments, change of details, queries.

And look on our Facebook page for great pictures and interesting birding news -

[www.facebook.com/BirdLifeZimbabwe](http://www.facebook.com/BirdLifeZimbabwe). You can find out about us, and projects you as a member can get involved with, on our informative website [www.birdlifezimbabwe.org](http://www.birdlifezimbabwe.org)

## 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. \$400 entrance fee for BLZ members, \$500 others.

**Greystone Park** -17.746184, 31.127215. From Rolf Avenue/Harare Drive traffic circle, turn east onto Gaydon Road. After 2 km turn right into Halford Road and preserve is 200 m on left.

## Mashonaland Branch

### *BirdLife Zimbabwe Mashonaland Calendar of Events: JUNE 2021*

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<b>Saturday 5<sup>th</sup></b>	Marlborough Vlei walk	Meet at 07.00 a.m.
<b>Sunday 6<sup>th</sup></b>	Mukuvisi Woodlands walk	Meet at 07.00 a.m.
<b>Sunday 13<sup>th</sup></b>	Ewanrigg Botanical Gardens	Meet at 07.00 a.m.
	Meet at St Michael's School, 90 Ridgeway North, Borrowdale. Entrance opposite Borrowdale Primary School playing fields. (Entrance fee at Ewanrigg and tollgate charge)	
<b>Saturday 19<sup>th</sup></b>	The Blue Swallow Survey	Meet at 03.00 p.m.
	Shingirai Sakarombe will give a presentation at the Mukuvisi Woodlands rondavel	
<b>Sunday 20<sup>th</sup></b>	Monavale Vlei walk	Meet at 07.00 a.m.
<b>Saturday 26<sup>th</sup></b>	<b>BLZ AGM at Chishakwe</b>	
	See notice above	

## *BirdLife Zimbabwe Mashonaland Calendar of Events: JULY 2021*

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<b>Saturday 3<sup>rd</sup></b>	Marlborough Vlei walk	Meet at 07.00 a.m.
<b>Sunday 4<sup>th</sup></b>	Mukuvisi Woodlands walk	Meet at 07.00 a.m.
<b>Saturday 10<sup>th</sup></b>	Umwinsidale TBC	Meet at 07.00 a.m.
<b>Saturday 17<sup>th</sup></b>	Talk – t.b.a. Mukuvisi Woodlands rondavel	Meet at 03.00 p.m.
<b>Sunday 18<sup>th</sup></b>	Monavale Vlei walk	Meet at 07.00 a.m.
<b>Sunday 23<sup>rd</sup></b>	Gosho Park, Marondera Meet at Mukuvisi Woodlands, Hillside Road	Meet at 07.00 a.m.

For further information contact Laurence Shadwell: [adderley@iwayafrica.co.zw](mailto:adderley@iwayafrica.co.zw) or [birdlifemash@gmail.com](mailto:birdlifemash@gmail.com)  
PHONE: 0712 800 905

### **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](mailto:ingram.sue@gmail.com) for more details.

**Lowveld** – contact Clive Stockil 0772-219204 or [clive@chilogorge.com](mailto: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 161  
Aug-Sept 2021 any time before the 15<sup>th</sup> July.*