

## Recent Sightings

### *Kruger National Park – 2011*

#### June 2011

Then, in Mpumalanga, 2 RED-NECKED SPURFOWLS were reported from N'watimhiri water hole in the Kruger National Park on Sunday. I am not sure of their status in the park but, from what I can work out, this appears to be quite a good record for the area.

#### May 2011

Osprey and White-throated Swallow at Lower Sabie – 28<sup>th</sup> May



Mike Buckham

#### April 2011

14<sup>th</sup>

And finally, in Mpumalanga, the WHITE-BACKED NIGHT HERONS at Lake Panic near Skukuza in the Kruger National Park continue to attract attention with some people even getting lucky enough to spot the 2 youngsters that are present there as well.

#### March 2011

Tuesday 29<sup>th</sup>

And finally, in Limpopo Province, a male PLAIN-BACKED SUNBIRD was reported near Crook's Corner close to Pafuri in the Kruger National Park on Tuesday.

Monday 28<sup>th</sup>

In Mpumalanga, the **WHITE-BACKED NIGHT HERONS** at Lake Panic near Skukuza in the Kruger National Park continued to perform to onlookers throughout the weekend.

Monday 11th

In Mpumalanga, a **STRIPED CRAKE** was reported on Monday in the Kruger National Park near the intersection between the S1 and S4 where the S4 crosses over a marshy river.

The Kruger National Park itself including a **CORN CRAKE** along the H-3 about 15km north of Jock Safari Lodge whilst 2 **YELLOW-BILLED OXPECKERS** were seen on a large Buffalo herd at Kwaggaspan also north of Jock Safari Lodge. This is only the 3rd atlas record in southern Kruger of this latter species, and by far the most westerly record in the region, the other two coming from the Crocodile Bridge area.



Yellow-billed Oxpecker at Kwaggaspan  
© Duncan McKenzie

Into Mpumalanga where the **STRIPED CRAKES** seem to have hit with force...

Unfortunately, the one record is a little delayed with the initial sighting being on 25 February of a bird with chicks at Renosterkoppies in the southern Kruger National Park. They were apparently in a small temporary pan near to the turn-off to the Stevenson-Hamilton Memorial.

The last reliable report of this was on Tuesday and subsequently, it would appear from the information that I have received that the small temporary pan that these birds were inhabiting has dried up.

Not to worry, because another one, this time along the southern shore of Mkhombo Dam, was reported yesterday morning.

It certainly seems to be a good season for these...



Striped Crake with chicks at Renosterkoppies  
© John Carlyon

Other records of interest in the province include a nesting pair of **WHITE-BACKED NIGHT HERONS** at Lake Panic bird hide near Skukuza in the Kruger National Park which were seen by a number of people over the weekend (a single bird was also seen from Skukuza camp flying upstream towards the Sabie River for 3 nights in a row at around 18h40) whilst at least 3 **WHITE-BROWED SPARROW-WEAVERS** with signs of nesting activity as well were noted about 4km from Tshokwane along the road to Lower Sabie.



White-backed Night Heron at Lake Panic  
© Tertius Gous



White-browed Sparrow-weaver near Tshokwane  
© Tertius Gous

#### **Renosterkoppies – 5/3/2011**

Peter Lawson has also called in to report a pair of **STRIPED CRAKES** with at least 2 chicks at Renosterkoppies in the southern Kruger National Park. They are apparently in a small temporary pan near to the turn-off to the Stevenson-Hamilton

#### **February 2011**

##### **Satara**

Lastly, in Mpumalanga, a **COMMON MYNA** was reported last week (21<sup>st</sup> to 25<sup>th</sup> Feb) from Satara camp in the Kruger National Park, potentially not a very exciting out-of-range record...

##### **Boulders – 21-23/2/11**

In Limpopo Province, the **GREY WAGTAIL** reported from Boulders Camp in the Kruger National Park on Monday remained throughout Tuesday as well, but was gone by first light on Wednesday morning.

##### **Skukuza 20/2/11**

A juvenile **EURASIAN HONEY BUZZARD** was reported from Skukuza yesterday



**Pafuri – 19/2/2011**

John Davies has also been in touch to give a slightly delayed report of yet another WHITE-THROATED BEE-EATER seen in the Kruger National Park on Monday. This time it was seen in the Makuleke Concession at Pafuri about 2km upstream of Crook's Corner on the Limpopo River. One wonders if this is the same individual reported near Shingwedzi 2 weeks ago or

**Satara 18/2/11**

Moving into Mpumalanga, the influx of RED-HEADED FINCHES into the Kruger National Park continues with a single male reported at Satara on Friday the 18<sup>th</sup>



Red-headed Finch at Satara  
© Hugh Chittenden

#### **Boulders – 21/2/2011**

Trevor Thompson has just been in touch to let me know that there is a GREY WAGTAIL currently showing well on the roof of the lodge at Boulders Camp near Mopane in the Kruger National Park! A very unusual locality for this bird away from water, but perhaps it is just moving through... This is clearly the season for those birders in the northern parts of the country to ensure that they add Grey Wagtail to their local lists!

#### **Crocodile Bridge – 11/2/2011**

The BROWN-THROATED WEAVER at Crocodile Bridge has moved from a nest on the northern bank to about two thirds across on the southern side, still in the river in reeds, upstream of the bridge.

*Richard Sowry*

#### **Phalaborwa**

the SOOTY FALCON reported from Foskor Mine near Phalaborwa on Thursday was also still present today.



**Pafuri**  
5<sup>th</sup>

An **AYRES' HAWK EAGLE** over the Levhuvhu River at Pafuri in the Kruger National Park on the weekend was also a notable record.



And finally, in Limpopo Province, there seems to be a bit of an influx of **THRUSH NIGHTINGALES** into the area with 4 separate birds reported along the Mphongolo Loop (S56) in the Kruger National Park on the weekend and another bird noted near the airstrip at The Outpost in the north of the park also on the weekend whilst there was some surprise when 3 **SHAFT-TAILED WHYDAHS** (a male and 2 females) were reported at the Maswidzudzu-spruit west of Letaba in the park on Sunday.

Although not a rarity in the true sense of the word, but nevertheless still a rare form, a xanthochroic (where the red colour is replaced by yellow) **WHITE-FRONTED BEE-EATER** was also reported recently in the park between Pafuri picnic site and Crook's Corner.



Thrush Nightingale along Mphongolo Loop  
© Niall Perrins



White-fronted Bee-eater near Pafuri  
© Thomas Hohls

## Phalaborwa

3<sup>rd</sup>

Elsewhere in the province, there was some excitement earlier today when a SOOTY FALCON was located at the top of the Selati Tailings Dam on the Foscor Mine near Phalaborwa.



Sooty Falcon near Phalaborwa  
© Adrian Haagner

## January 2011

### Satara

30<sup>th</sup>

Moving into Mpumalanga, a RIVER WARBLER was noted on Saturday south of the Satara – Orpen road (close to the Nsemani road turnoff) in the Kruger National Park, whilst yesterday, in Satara camp itself, no fewer than 5 RED-HEADED FINCHES were present and appeared to possibly be building a nest.

### Skukuza

Then into Mpumalanga where the most depressing record of the last few weeks surfaced earlier today. On 29 January 2011, a WHITE-THROATED BEE-EATER was seen along last river loop road just before you get to the Skukuza day visitor area's turn off coming from Lower Sabie in the Kruger National Park.

This becomes only the 12th ever sighting of this species in Southern Africa with previous records being a single bird in the Kgalagadi Transfrontier Park in December 1988, a single bird in Sedgefield in February 1990, one near Wakkerstroom in April 1995, 7 birds at Cape Point in March 1998, 2 in Mkuze Game Reserve in September 1999, a single bird in Mana Pools National Park in Zimbabwe in November 2002, one bird in Pearly Beach in April 2004, a singleton at Shingwedzi in the Kruger National Park in December 2004, one near East London in September 2006, one in a Hillcrest garden in October 2008 and, most recently, 2 birds at Balule Nature



### **Malelane**

28th

Moving into Mpumalanga, a GREEN SANDPIPER was reported on Friday about 5km from the Malalane Gate in the Kruger National Park.



**Pretoriuskop**

18<sup>th</sup>

Mpumalanga produced a single EURASIAN HONEY BUZZARD on Tuesday about 2km north of Pretoriuskop in the Kruger National Park.



**Pafuri Area**

1<sup>st</sup>

Report from Terence Elliot:

I took these pictures of an European Honey Buzzard on 2011-01-01 close to Crooks Corner in the Pafuri Area in the Kruger National Park.

