

Recent Sightings

Other National Parks

July 2011

West Coast

Saturday 9th

Other excitement on Saturday morning took the form of an overwintering COMMON REDSHANK at Geelbek in the West Coast National Park – whilst this species regularly overwinters in Namibia, it very rarely does so in the Western Cape.

June 2011

Addo Elephant

Monday, 27th

Elsewhere in the province, the Woody Cape section of the Addo Elephant National Park delivered some interesting birds last week as well including a single AFRICAN JACANA and at least 2 SQUACCO HERONS.

Garden Route – Knysna

Tuesday, 14th

6 FULVOUS DUCKS were recorded at Knysna Sewage Works

May 2011

Garden Route National Park

The report is going out a little earlier today since I potentially have other commitments later today and might not get an opportunity to do the report then...

And, besides, there is virtually nothing to report on with the only record of any note coming from the Western Cape where an adult **PALM-NUT VULTURE** was located on the farm, *Fernbank*, near Sedgefield on Tuesday (31st). Apparently, there have been reports of this bird in the general area since December 2010.

If anybody is interested in chasing the bird, the farm is situated on the Sedgefield/Karatara tarred road about 7.5km from the low water bridge at GPS bearing 3359.035S and 2249.429E on the left-hand side of the roadway as you head towards Karatara. Please remember that this is private property and, should you wish to visit the farm, please make contact with the farmer, Gordon Robertson Jnr., on 044 356 2719, first to arrange permission for your visit.



Palm-nut Vulture near Sedgefield
© Robert Smith

West Coast NP

The only other record of any note came from the West Coast National Park on Saturday afternoon when a female **SENTINEL ROCK THRUSH** was located at the Seeberg lookout point there.



Sentinel Rock Thrush at Seeberg
© Cliff Dorse

April 2011

Garden Route – Wilderness Section

20th

A **RED-BACKED SHRIKE** was located in the Langvlei Dunes in Wilderness in the Western Cape earlier today.

Kgalagadi Transfrontier Park

14th

Then into the Northern Cape where, yet again, we have another record of **CHESTNUT WEAVER** with a single male spotted yesterday at Twee Rivieren in the Kgalagadi Transfrontier Park. It's

hard to believe that we started 2011 off without ever having had this species recorded in South Africa before and we are now only in April and have already had our 3rd record!



West Coast NP

8th

Starting in the Western Cape, news has been received of a EURASIAN OYSTERCATCHER and a PECTORAL SANDPIPER reported last weekend in a saltmarsh area at Hugo's Pos on the Langebaan Lagoon. Unfortunately, this is in a military area and is, therefore, not accessible to the general public, but it may be worth keep your eyes peeled if you are planning to visit the West Coast National Park anytime soon as this area is on the Postberg peninsula which is effectively part of the park.

March 2011

Bontebok NP

3/21/11 - Another good provincial bird included a male RED-BACKED SHRIKE near the entrance to the Bontebok National Park yesterday, while EUROPEAN ROLLERS also continue to be reported with single birds were reported near the entrance to Bontebok National Park.

Tankwa-Karoo NP

25/3/11 - In the Tanqua Karoo area, a BLACK-CHESTED SNAKE EAGLE was reported from the Skitterykloof area on the weekend

Karoo NP

25/3/11 - in the Karoo National Park, both VILLAGE INDIGOBIRD and AFRICAN FIREFINCH were located around the campsite area on the weekend.

Garden Route NP

22/3/11 – John and Greta Graham reported several calling MARSH WARBLERS from the Wilderness area on the Garden Route over the weekend. This is an incredibly good bird for the Western Cape and might be tempting for a number of provincial listers.

This only just overshadowed another brilliant 2nd record for the province discovered yesterday in Nature's Valley and still present this morning in the form of a SOUTHERN CARMINE BEE-EATER! From what I can work out, the only previous record is historical...very historical...and comes from Genadendal in the 1800's where it was reported by Layard! Apparently, the bird was seen towards the end of St. George's Drive in Nature's Valley – alternating between perches on a dead tree and a Pine tree some 200 meters apart.



There seems to be quite a bit of interest from Western Cape twitchers in this, so for those keen provincial listers, David Weaver has just called in to confirm that the SOUTHERN CARMINE BEE-EATER is still present in Nature's Valley this morning. It is spending a lot of time hawking insects from the dead tree in front of the Nature's Valley Trust offices and is showing particularly well. David indicated that he has informed Cindy at the NVT offices of where exactly the bird is, so if you are in the area, you can always pop in there and ask her to point out where the bird is hanging around. This is a serious provincial mega, so make the effort to go and add it to your Western Cape lists if you can...

Addo Elephant

the drove of reports of EUROPEAN ROLLERS also continues with several individuals reported in the vicinity of Alexandria, a singleton in the southern parts of Addo National Park, 2 birds at the Coega IDZ near Port Elizabeth and another near Tankatara.

West Coast NP

27th

Elsewhere in the province, 2 BLACK-CHESTED SNAKE EAGLES (an adult and a sub-adult) were located about 10km north of the West Coast National Park on the weekend.



Black-chested Snake Eagle north of the WCNP
© Mercy Koimburi

Mike Spain has made contact to report two interesting records during this week from the west coast area – the first is ... and the second is a probable GREAT REED WARBLER from Abrahamskraal in the West Coast National Park, both very good birds for the province.

3/21/11 - And then, although not a rarity, still an interesting sighting of an ARCTIC SKUA (aka Parasitic Jaeger) seen coming in to drink at the Abrahamskraal Water Hole in the West Coast National Park yesterday whilst 2 birds were present there this morning.



Kgalagadi TFP (relevant to)

In the Northern Cape, there was an interesting record at Tswalu Kalahari Reserve on Sunday when two SEDGE WARBLERS were located at Rogela Pan there, a record way further west than their normal distribution. Also, with respect to the GREY-HEADED KINGFISHER noted at Kathu in the last report, I have subsequently received 2 independent reports of this species seen and photographed in early 2010 at Nossob in the Kgalagadi Transfrontier Park, so there is at least one prior provincial record that I am now aware of.

February 2011 **Bontebok NP**

a female AMUR FALCON was reported near the entrance to Bontebok National Park

Kgalagadi TFP

21st

In the Northern Cape, the BLACK CUCKOO just south of Mata Mata in the Kgalagadi Transfrontier Park is still around

West Coast NP

8th

Per Holmen has also been in touch to confirm that the COMMON REDSHANK is still showing well this morning at the Geelbek hide (the original hide, not the new one) in the West Coast National Park.



Common Redshank at Geelbek
© Per Holmen

7th

The West Coast National Park delivered an interesting bird on Saturday when an immature MONTAGU'S HARRIER was seen quartering the area between Schrywershoek and Geelbek (unfortunately, despite intensive searching, it was not relocated yesterday). There was also the added attraction of a COMMON REDSHANK which showed well at Geelbek throughout the weekend.



Common Redshank at Geelbek
© John Graham



Common Redshank at Geelbek
© Cliff Dorse



Common Redshank at Geelbek
© Trevor Hardaker

January 2011
Kgalagadi Transfrontier Park
30th

Moving into the Northern Cape, the bizarre regional records continue. The most recent one comes from Mata Mata in the Kgalagadi Transfrontier Park where a BLACK CUCKOO was present in the camp there on Saturday.



Black Cuckoo at Mata Mata
© Graeme Ellis

Garden Route NP

Along the Garden Route, there are still numbers of EUROPEAN ROLLERS being reported with several along the Uplands Road outside of Plettenberg Bay and more along the road to Plettenberg Bay Game Reserve on the weekend.

Also of interest on Friday (28th) was a LONG-CRESTED EAGLE outside PetroSA on the N2 near Mossel Bay whilst yesterday (30th), a GREAT REED WARBLER was reported from Island Lake just east of Wilderness.

West Coast NP

27th

Starting in the Western Cape, the most exciting, and equally depressing, news was the discovery of an adult BROWN BOOBY on Malgas Island in Saldanha Bay last Thursday. The bird was unfortunately only seen on the one day for a short period while it rested on the island, but it may pay to keep a look out along the coast anywhere in this area in case it is still hanging around somewhere. This is the 1st record of this species for the province and one of only a handful of confirmed records for the entire subregion.



25th

As usual, we start in the Western Cape where a EURASIAN OYSTERCATCHER was reported along the beach about 1km north of Seeberg in the West Coast National Park on Tuesday. Unfortunately, the bird has not subsequently been seen in the area, but another individual was found on Saturday along the beach about 3km west of the mouth of the Berg River at Veldrif. According to the observer of the latter bird, the plumage was very similar to the bird photographed at Seeberg, so it may well even refer to the same individual.



Garden Route NP

23rd

On the Garden Route, a EURASIAN HOBBY was reported on Sunday between Wilderness and Sedgefield

Agulhas NP area

a little further west, along the coastline between Arniston and De Hoop Nature Reserve, a flock of 23 CASPIAN PLOVERS were recorded amongst Kittlitz's and Common Ringed Plovers late last week. This latter record is particularly interesting given the number of birds and the habitat and obviously refers to a group that was on the move to somewhere else – in recent years, this species has become extremely rare in the province.

Kgalagadi Transfrontier NP

17th

Moving into the Northern Cape, it seems that the main attractions have been the recent influx of CHESTNUT WEAVERS into the province. The bird at Tswalu Kalahari Reserve was still present on the weekend and attracted a small group of local twitchers. Other interesting news from the province comes from the Kgalagadi Transfrontier Park where the Ljiersdraai area has produced a LESSER MOORHEN and a GREATER PAINTED SNIPE, both very unusual records for this part of the world.



Lesser Moorhen at Ljiersdraai
© Wanda Wentzel



Greater Painted Snipe at Ljiersdraai
© Wanda Wentzel

Kgalagadi Transfrontier NP **10th**

Reported by Madel Whittington via Rihann Geysler:
CHESTNUT WEAVER (*Ploceus rubiginosus*) seen in Nosob in the Kalahari!!!

This bird is not on the SA List and as such you will not find it on the SABAP2 website.

For the SA listers, all the best in chasing this one down. Keep us updated.

Mokala NP **2nd**

Roelof van der Breggen reports an out of range Brown Snake Eagle that was seen in Lillydale Camp in the Mokala National Park on the 2nd January.

1st

Roelof van der Breggen has just been in touch to report on a Dusky Lark that was seen in the Lillydale section of Mokala National Park, south-west of Kimberley. Unfortunately he was not able to get a photo of this out of range sighting.

If you are in the area please keep your eyes open for this species and let us know if you happen to see one.