

Afring News

An electronic journal published by SAFRING, Animal Demography Unit at the University of Cape Town



Afring News online accepts papers containing ringing information about birds. This includes interesting ringing trips, interesting captures, faunistic observations relating to ringing, analyses of ringing data, and reports of projects and conferences that had a ringing component.

Editor: H. Dieter Oschadleus

LIMPOPO BIRD GUIDES GET HANDS-ON EXPERIENCE

Derek Engelbrecht, Lisa Martus-de Boer and Joe Grosel

Recommended citation format: Engelbrecht D, Martus-de Boer L and Grosel J. Limpopo Bird Guides get hands-on experience. Afring News 40:4-6

URL: http://safring.adu.org.za/afring_news_current.php

Published online: 14 April 2011

- ISSN 2222-341X -



LIMPOPO BIRD GUIDES GET HANDS-ON EXPERIENCE

Derek Engelbrecht, Lisa Martus-de Boer and Joe Grosel

School of Molecular and Life Sciences, University of Limpopo, Private Bag X1106, Sovenga, e-mail: fauna.pburg@mindsmail.co.za

As part of the continuous development of the Greater Limpopo birding guides, BirdLife South Africa and the Ben de Boer Trust hosted a skills development course at Tshulu Camp (22° 34.779'S 30° 48.518'E, <http://www.tshulutrust.org>) in Venda, Limpopo Province from 9-14 March 2011. Fourteen guides attended the course which involved, amongst others, improvement of bird identification skills, an atlasing workshop, dealing with clients, raptor identification and, of course, ringing birds. The aim of the ringing demonstration was to give the guides the opportunity of seeing birds close-up, to highlight identification features and to demonstrate the various aspects of ringing such as putting up nets, removing birds from nets and ringing and release of birds.

The area is so remote that relatively little is known about the birds in the area, so ringing was bound to reveal a few surprises. Although there are a variety of habitats at Tshulu Lodge, we decided to target the riparian habitat of the Mutale River.

A total of 64 birds and 26 species were ringed in two days of ringing during the course (Table 1). The numerical winners of the ringing demonstration were a tie of nine each between Jameson's Firefinches and Emerald-spotted Wood-doves. Some of the highlights included Red-faced Cisticola, European Nightjar, several African Paradise Flycatchers and an Olive-tree Warbler. The "catch-of-the-day" was a toss-up between the European Nightjar and an Olive-tree Warbler. In the end, the latter was unanimously voted as the winner as it was a lifer for most of the guides and it was a special opportunity to see such a master "skulker" from close-up.



A European Nightjar – a lifer for many on the course

Table 1.Totals of birds caught at Tshulu Lodge

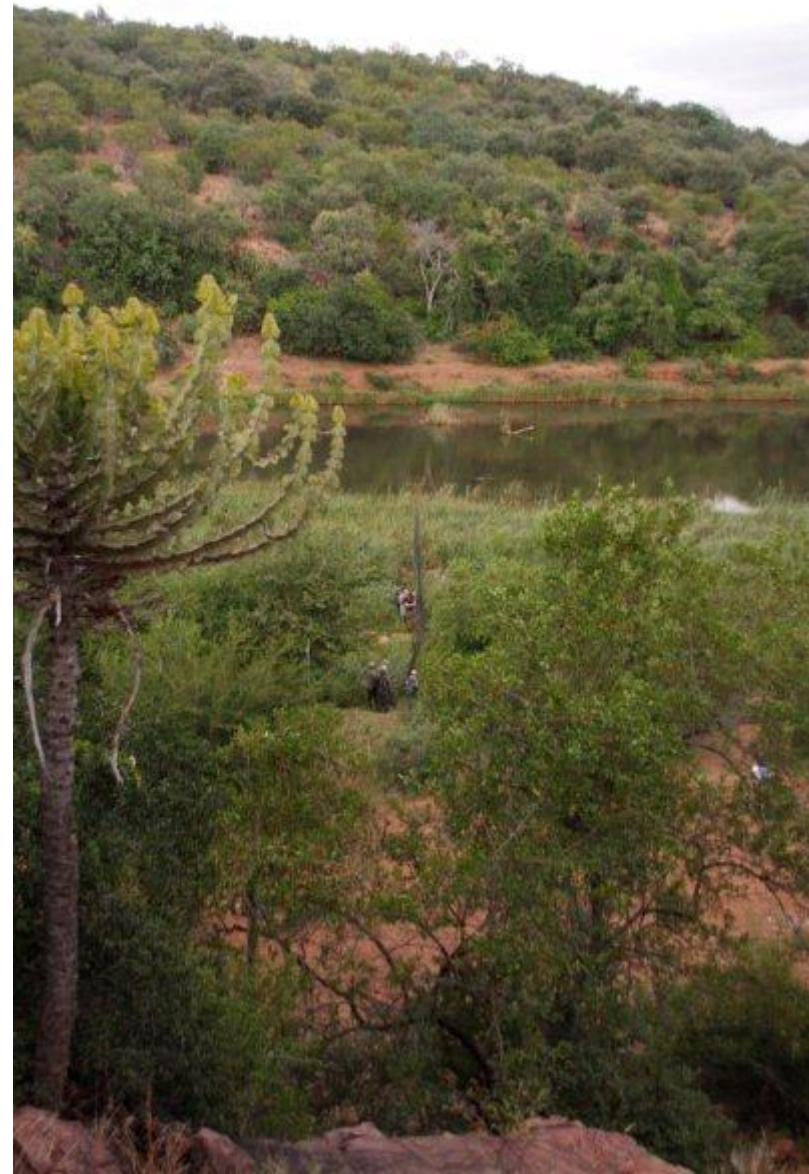
Species number	English name	Totals
321	Emerald-spotted Wood-doves	9
351	Klaas's Cuckoo	1
371	European Nightjar	1
398	African Pygmy Kingfisher	2
402	Brown-hooded Kingfisher	1
518	Square-tailed Nightjar	1
545	Dark-capped Bulbul	3
550	Yellow-bellied Greenbul	2
597	Olive-tree Warbler	1
609	Little Rush Warbler	1
621	Long-billed Crombec	1



625	Yellow-breasted Apalis	5
628	Grey-backed Camaroptera	1
644	Red-faced Cisticola	2
682	African Paradise Flycatcher	3
712	Black-backed Puffback	3
771	Collared Sunbird	2
791	Spectacled Weaver	2
803	Southern Masked Weaver	1
805	Red-billed Quelea	4
835	Jameson's Firefinch	9
837	Red-billed Firefinch	2
839	Blue Waxbill	3
843	Common Waxbill	2
849	Dusky Indigobird	1
4142	Southern Grey-headed Sparrow	1



The diminutive African Pygmy Kingfisher is always a popular catch



Checking nets in a reed-bed in the Mutale River



Olive-tree Warbler



Demonstrating the data capturing side of bird ringing