

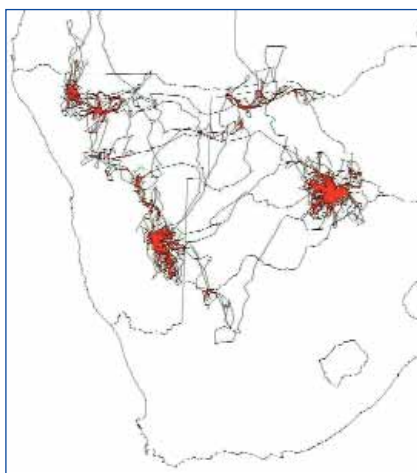
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### Namibian ambassador settles in Botswana

Pete Hancock, BirdLife Botswana

During 2007, I was fascinated to learn from John Mendelsohn that a Cape Vulture fitted with a satellite transmitter in Namibia had visited six Southern African countries. He now tells me that by joining up the over 18,000 separate locations recorded from the transmitter, the bird has travelled a minimum of 124,000 kilometres. If ever there was a symbol unifying the SADC region this bird, casually referred to as CV6, has to be it. I was aware that while in Botswana, CV6 had passed close by our two breeding colonies at the Tswapong Hills in eastern Botswana and Mannyelanong Hill in the south-eastern part of the country, emphasising the inter-connectedness of all the Cape Vulture colonies in Southern Africa. However, I was surprised to learn that the bird had spent most of the 2007 breeding season in the Central District of Botswana, near Serowe Village, and had been returning to the same spot repeatedly during this period. From the satellite image, it appeared as though the site frequented was along a watercourse in a fairly hilly area (by Botswana standards!) but this required ground-truthing before it could be verified.



Movements of CV6 between February 2005 and July 2008  
(Courtesy J Mendelsohn)

Over the Christmas period, when I was in Serowe, the opportunity presented itself to visit the site. It was with a keen sense of anticipation that I followed a track along the Paje River to the area frequented by the bird, since there was the distinct possibility of finding a new, small, isolated Cape Vulture breeding colony in this remote valley. The track soon petered out, necessi-

tating a long hike following my GPS to the precise locality given by John. It soon became apparent that the site was along the drainage line although low cliffs were visible higher up the valley. Eventually I emerged from thick bush to see a well developed riparian with tall emergent Monkey Thorn *Acacia galpinii* trees with several White-backed Vulture nests in their uppermost branches. A few large immature White-backed Vultures flew off, but there was no sign of CV6.



Photos: Pete Hancock

It is clear that CV6 spent many days and nights during the 2007 breeding season with these White-backed Vultures. The same appears to be happening now in 2008. The locations of the bird show that it has not nested, but it is strange that CV6 should keep the company of White-backed Vultures during the breeding season when it is quite aware of the Cape Vulture colony in the Tswapong Hills 50 kilometres to the east, having passed there during its peregrinations.

White-backed Vulture nest on canopy of tall Acacia in riparian vegetation

We hope that it remains in central Botswana.



### More Black Harrier sightings in the Namib

Andreas Keding

A juvenile Black Harrier was seen on the morning of the 23 May 2008, about one kilometre south of the Kwessiegat turn-off on the main road (2415Dd). It flew over the road and we watched it going repeatedly after Lark-like Bunting. Eventually it caught one. Another harrier was seen on 21.05.08 between Wolwedans Lodge and Camp (2515Bb.) and then again on 04.05.08 on the border fence of Die Duine and Niekersrus (part of Wêreldend 2516Aa).

During June a Black Harrier was seen near Bushman's Koppie (2415Dd) and one at Granite water point on Aandstêr.

During July, we had a beautiful Black Harrier sighting, approximately half way between Wolwedans base and Jagkop water point. The Black Harrier was actually

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following an African wild cat on the ground and kept hovering over the cat. When we came closer it veered off and flew behind the dunes.

I had a sighting of Black Harrier on the 02.07.08. I think it is the same bird. I got three reasonable photos before it was too far away.

On the 10 July at 16.00, Mike, Ann Scott and I saw a Black Harrier. I am sure this is the same bird I have been seeing in the southern part of NamibRand. We had a good look at it and all were pretty sure that it is a young bird. It was hovering just above the ground and as we approached it gained altitude where it continued to soar over more or less the same spot. It was quite windy that day.

There have been reports of a Black Harrier sighting closer to Wolwedans, but the guides weren't 100% sure. According to the description it sounds like one. They said it had an aerial dispute with a Southern Pale-chanting Goshawk.

### News Flashes



► A picture of a raptor roadkill – could it be the elusive Black Harrier? If yes, then what the blue blazes was it doing there? The bird was found about 10km north of Aus on the C13 on 2 August 2008 at co-ordinates 26° 36.139'S 16° 21.694'E.

Holger Kolberg

Yes indeed, it is the elusive Black Harrier - an adult by the looks of it. Many thanks for letting me have the coordinates - I am collecting all sightings for 2008 so this will go in the data base. You ask what its doing there...well resting I think.

Seriously there is a lot of activity reported to me from Aandstêr /Namib Rand area by Andreas Keding and Mike and Ann Scott with both adults and a young bird active since June to present day. They reported the harriers following wild cats and probably hunting the larks and finches that are in good numbers there. Aus is but a short flight away!

Rob Simmons

► About 20 kms east of Helmeringhausen on the farm Lovedale, Malcolm Campbell reports seeing

a Black Harrier in November 2007. Thanks to Jaco Steenkamp for sending us this information.

► While flying over our farm, I sighted a nest with a breeding Lappet-faced Vulture. The co-ordinates are S 23° 50.465' E015° 46.466'.

Kristin Schreiber

► Who ringed the juvenile African Fish Eagle seen on the beach at Lüderitz. The ring is visible on its left leg in the photo on page 3 of Raptor News. #4 June 2008. Apart from Dirk Heinrich, who rings left tarsus, we heard that Mark Anderson might have also ringed along the Orange, so who's chick was it????

Jean-Paul Roux

► In August 2008, several people regularly saw an Osprey at Pelican Point, Walvis Bay.

► On 1 August, 2008 I saw an adult Tawny Eagle attacking and killing an adult puffadder near Otjovisando in Etosha National Park, Namibia.

Hartmut Kolb

► In August on the way to Omitara, Namibia, I saw a Tawny Eagle and a White-backed Vulture feeding on a dead black-backed jackal on the road. On the return journey a Lappet-faced Vulture was feeding on the remains.

Dirk Heinrich

► I saw an Osprey at Kaisosi Lodge in Rundu, northern Namibia, with a pink ring on the right leg.

Hartmut Kolb

► On 11/12/2007 I saw 7, 18/4/1008, 17 and 4/7/2008 14 Lappet-faced Vultures on the beach between 12:00 and 14:00. All were seen near Rocky Point, Skeleton Coast Park, Namibia, approximately 3 km south of Rocky Cape Fria.

Rosta Janik



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#### Raptors Namibia co-ordinators

Marilyn & Peter Bridgeford  
Walvis Bay  
Tel. (064) 22 0443  
Cell 081 260 7375  
E-mail pmbridge@iway.na

Ann & Mike Scott  
Swakopmund  
Tel. / fax (064) 40 4866  
Cell 081 284 5130  
E-mail ecoserve@iway.na

#### Raptor road counts and road count queries:

P.O. Box 90645  
Klein Windhoek  
Windhoek  
E-mail raptors@mweb.com.na



# TAKE A CLOSER

# LOOK



**Report leg-ring and wing-tag information to support threatened birds in southern Africa**



### Note:

- ◆ Date, time and place where bird was seen
- ◆ Colour, number and letters on the ring or tag
- ◆ Ring or tag on the left or right side of the bird

**Send the information with your contact details to SAFRING and the relevant country office**

**SAFRING**  
 University of Cape Town  
 Rondebosch 7701, RSA  
 E-mail: [safring@adu.uct.ac.za](mailto:safring@adu.uct.ac.za)  
<http://safring.adu.org.za>  
 Tel: ++ 27 21 650 2421/2  
 Fax: ++ 27 21 650 3434



**ANGOLA**  
 Ministry of Environment  
 Biodiversity Department  
 bsap.angola@nexus.ao  
 pedrovazpinto@gmail.com

**SOUTH AFRICA**  
 BirdLife South Africa  
 Tel: ++27 11 789 1122  
 info@birdlife.org.za  
 P O Box 515  
 Randburg 2125, South Africa

**BOTSWANA**  
 Birdlife Botswana  
 Tel: ++267 6865618  
 birdlifemaun@boisnet.bw  
 P O Box 20463  
 Maun, Botswana

**SWAZILAND**  
 National Trust Commission  
 Tel: ++268 416 481 or 416 489  
 ceo@sntc.org.sz  
 P O Box 100  
 Lobamba, Swaziland

**MOZAMBIQUE**  
 Department of Geology  
 Eduardo Mondlane University  
 Tel & Fax: ++258 21 475280  
 P O Box 257  
 Maputo

**ZAMBIA**  
 Zambian Ornithological Society  
 Tel: ++260 126 0709  
 zos@zamnet.zm  
 P O Box 33944  
 Lusaka, 10101, Zambia

**NAMIBIA**  
 Namibia Nature Foundation  
 Tel: ++264 61 248345  
 sw@nnf.org  
 P O Box 245  
 Windhoek, Namibia

**ZIMBABWE**  
 Tel: ++263 9 282842  
 E-mail: [pmundy@nust.ac.zw](mailto:pmundy@nust.ac.zw)  
 P O Box FM 424  
 Famona, Bulawayo  
 Zimbabwe

