

Cape Parrot Newsletter

Cape Parrot Counting 2019

This year marks the 22nd annual Cape Parrot Big Birding Day (CPBBD). It is amazing that this initiative has been continuing for this long and it is all thanks to the keen volunteers we get every year. Last year the national news did a story for the momentous 21st count. We were very lucky that they got great footage of a flock of 20 or so parrots. The counts not only highlights the species but also brings attention to the forests in which they live. The overall conservation of these forests is important for many species also as this habitat houses a wonderful biodiversity.

As always a group of students from the University of KwaZulu-Natal will assist in monitoring the forests around Ingeli in southern KZN. We have our regular post-graduate student volunteers that participate in the count every year. We also get to take some undergraduate students and expose these early career biologists to camping, forest fieldwork, data collection and to this special species and beautiful habitat.

All other groups are citizen scientists whose enthusiasm for volunteering provides us with the much needed data on the population and distribution of the Cape Parrot. See page 4 of this newsletter for more information on how you can get involved with the Cape Parrot count this year. Please encourage as many people as possible to participate as the more volunteers we have the better we understand the current state of the Cape Parrots.



CAPE PARROT
(*Poicephalus robustus*)

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Top 5 FAQs - Answered

The following questions about Cape parrots and the Cape parrot count have been frequently asked:

1. Why is the Cape parrot counting day over one weekend every year?

The aim of the Cape parrot count is to estimate the overall wild Cape parrot population each year. Cape parrots are nomadic and move depending on food availability. By coordinating with all areas where the parrots occur, and getting everyone to count them at the same time, we prevent the problem of double counting the same individuals thereby preventing an overestimation of the population.

2. Why a morning and evening count on the Cape parrot counting weekend?

Again Cape parrots move depending on food availability so they will be spread out and moving throughout the day while foraging. By counting in the morning before sunrise and in the evening before sundown we can count them when they are less spread out, as they are leaving and returning to their roosts.

3. What is so special about Cape parrots?

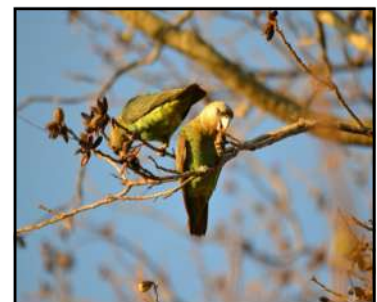
Cape parrots are rare and are South Africa's only endemic parrot. This means that you will not find wild Cape parrots anywhere else in the world. They are a true proudly South African species.

4. What are the major threats facing Cape parrots?

Loss of habitat, decreased food availability, fewer nesting sites, diseases and illegal trade.

5. What needs to be done to help conserve these birds?

The main things that can be done is to conserve natural Cape parrot habitat, control illegal trade, and educate people about Cape parrots and the importance of conserving them.



Zoological Society of SA 2019

The 39th Zoological Society of South Africa (ZSSA) congress will be from 7 –10 July 2019 in Skukuza, Kruger National Park. The ZSSA was founded on 11 March 1959 to promote Zoology and the interests of zoologists in southern Africa. This year the society will be celebrating its 60th year of existence, and to commemorate this milestone, the theme for this year's congress will be about *Celebrating 60 years of African Zoology*.

Presentations at the congress will follow subthemes which include: Behavioural ecology/physiology, Biodiversity conservation and ecosystem resilience, Conservation physiology, Evolutionary biology, Fisheries management, Freshwater ecology, Human dimensions of wildlife (including citizen science), Marine biology (both for deep-sea systems and estuaries/rocky shores, and Taxonomy and systematics. Updates about parrot relevant talks will feature in the next newsletter at the end of this year.

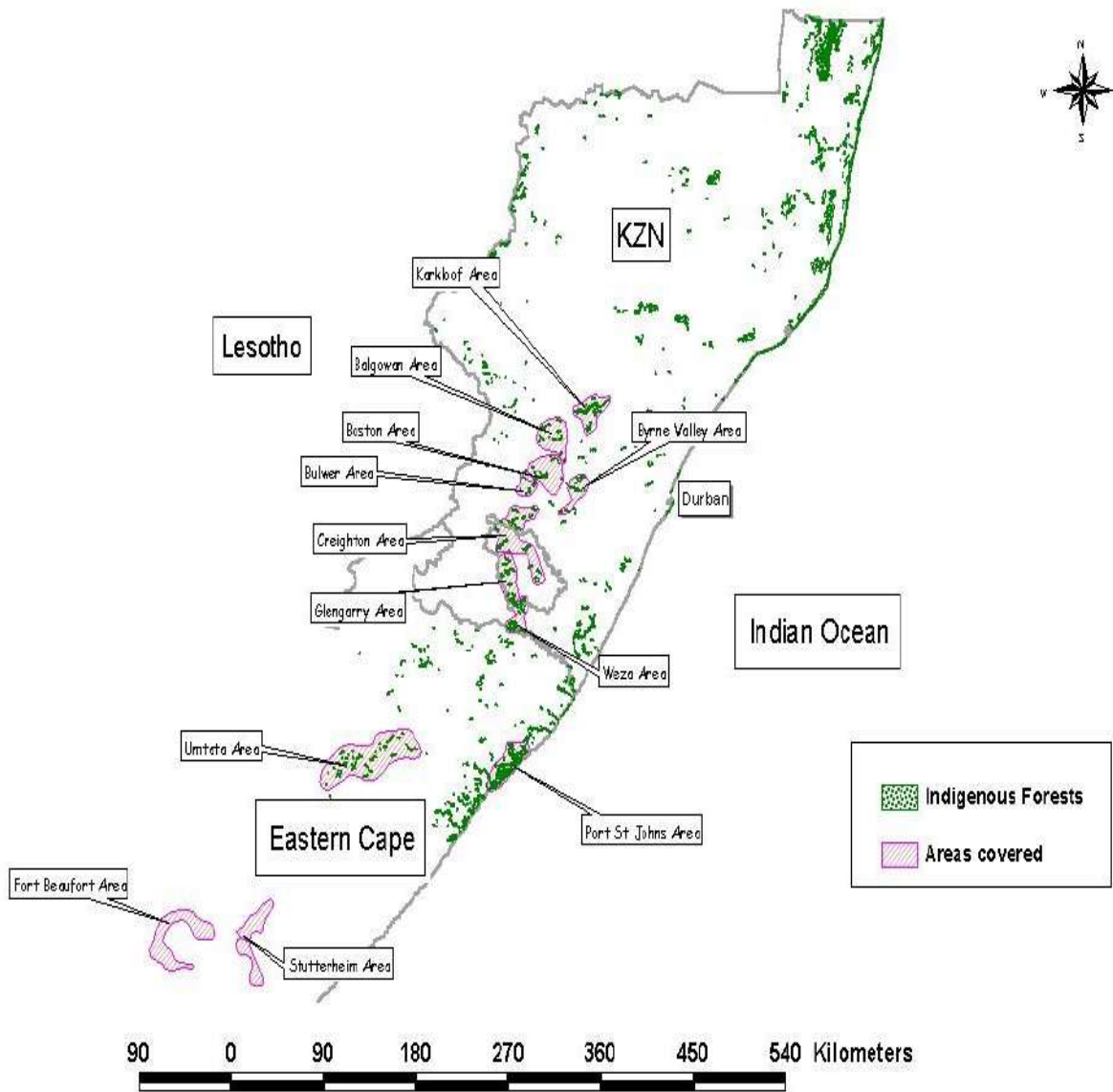
In celebration of the 60th anniversary, a special issue will be published in the third issue of the 2020 journal *African Zoology*. This issue will include scientific contributions/critical reviews on African fauna as well as practical and theoretical aspects of Zoology. Also in 2020, The International Congresses of Zoology (ICZ) will be hosted in Cape Town with a focus on the human impact to wildlife.



Contact persons for Cape Parrot Big Birding Day 04 & 05 May 2019

(See next page for map)

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Main areas covered by coordinators on the Cape Parrot Big Birding Day (Limpopo areas not shown)



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