



## **MEDIA RELEASE**

**For immediate release**

### **Birding Big Day 2015 takes on a whole new look**

**Johannesburg, 18 November 2015:**

BirdLife South Africa's goal during Birding Big Day (BBD) 2015 is to raise awareness about birds and money for bird conservation. Furthermore, with help from birders across the country, the organisation hopes to collectively record as many of South Africa's 846 bird species in a single day as possible. This event is a celebration of the magnificent diversity of birds in South Africa. The annual BirdLife South Africa BBD will be held from Dawn to Dusk on Saturday 28 November 2015.

In addition to the normal BBD categories (which are listed below), participants will be able to log their sightings during BBD on the mobile application, BirdLasser. Sightings will automatically sync with the BirdLasser database, so other teams and the general public will be able to follow each team's progress over the internet. In addition, BirdLife South Africa will be able to monitor the total number of species seen by all of the teams!

How to participate? Interested people need to install BirdLasser on their phone (Android, iPhone or Windows) and contact Henk Nel from BirdLasser on [henk@birdlasser.com](mailto:henk@birdlasser.com) to notify him that they will be part of this exciting initiative. The BirdLasser team will then add each team's information to the BBD map.

BirdLife South Africa would also like to encourage teams to submit sightings to the Southern African Bird Atlas Project 2 (SABAP2), even as incidental records. Hopefully many people will become active SABAP2 participants after they have seen how easy it is to use the app, record the bird sightings, and submit the information to SABAP2!

Read on ... there is a category to suit all birders, from beginners to twitchers.

"Bird your 'Hood" gives birders 24 hours to go birding in their garden, local park or school grounds; as long as it is close enough to walk, bike or hike to. So enthusiastic gardeners or budding backyard birders can make a list of the birds visiting their local patch during BBD.

For the more serious birder, there is the Open Category. The maximum area that can be visited is an area within a radius of 50 km during a 24-hour period. The Handicap category is based on the number of birds recorded in the 50 km radius relative to the number of birds which were recorded there during SABAP1 and/or SABAP2. Please

note that participants in this category must send the quarter degree squares to BirdLife South Africa so that the number of birds recorded in that area during SABAP1 and SABAP2 can be determined.

Teams and participants should strive to maintain proper birding ethics at all times. For more information, visit <http://www.birdlife.org.za/events/birding-big-day>

**End**

**For further information, please contact:** Nikki McCartney, 083 636 1060, [events@birdlife.org.za](mailto:events@birdlife.org.za)

1. BirdLife South Africa strives to conserve birds, their habitats and biodiversity through scientifically-based programmes, through supporting the sustainable and equitable use of natural resources and through encouraging people to enjoy and value nature.
2. BirdLife South Africa contact details: Isdell House, 17 Hume Road, Dunkeld West, Private Bag X5000, Parklands, 2121, Johannesburg, South Africa, Tel. +27-11-7891122, Fax. +27-11-7895188, e-mail address: [info@birdlife.org.za](mailto:info@birdlife.org.za), website: [www.birdlife.org.za](http://www.birdlife.org.za)
3. For more information on entering the BirdLife South Africa Birding Big Day, go to [www.birdlife.org.za](http://www.birdlife.org.za) where you can download the entry form. Alternatively, contact BirdLife South Africa (011-789-1122, [info@birdlife.org.za](mailto:info@birdlife.org.za)) and we will email, fax or post the information to you.
4. For more information about BirdLasser, visit <http://www.birdlasser.com/>
5. For more information about SABAP2, visit <http://sabap2.adu.org.za/>