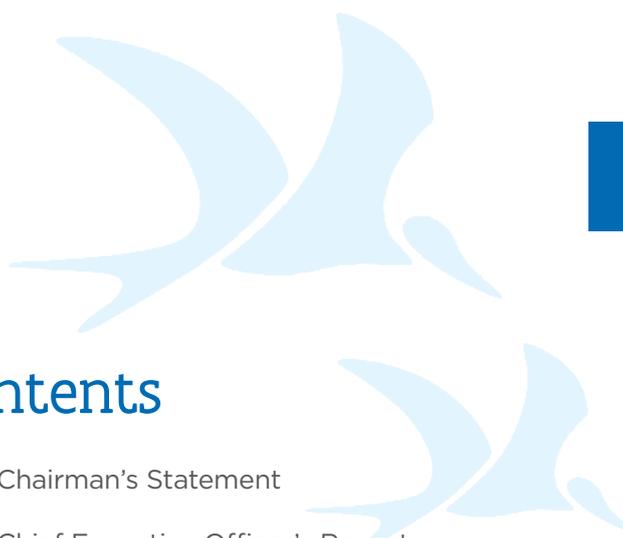


BIRDLIFE SOUTH AFRICA

# ANNUAL REPORT 2018







## Contents

- 2** Chairman's Statement
- 3** Chief Executive Officer's Report
- 8** Looking Ahead
- 9** Strategic Framework
- 10** Organisational Objectives
- 11** Conservation Objectives
- 12** Organisational Structure
- 13** Division of Expenses and Sources of Funding
- 14** Business Division Reports
- 20** Conservation Division Reports
- 30** Annual Review of the Performance and Effectiveness of BirdLife South Africa
- 32** Financials
- 34** Sponsors and Supporters
- 36** Office-bearers and Staff

### Vision

BirdLife South Africa wishes to see a country and region where nature and people live in greater harmony, more equitably and sustainably.

### Mission

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 by encouraging people to enjoy and value nature.

*cover* The African Black Oystercatcher was Bird of the Year in 2018 and BirdLife South Africa promoted awareness about this coastal seabird through a poster, learning resources, articles in African Birdlife magazine and posts on social media. (Photo: Peter Ryan)

*left* The Marsh Owl, an inhabitant of wetland and grassland, is almost certainly benefiting from BirdLife South Africa's efforts to ensure the protection of these important habitats.

CHRIS VAN ROOYEN

## Chairman's Statement

It is wonderful to be able to report, yet again, on a successful year for BirdLife South Africa. We have met, and exceeded, our targets in almost every area of endeavour, and this at a time of subdued economic activity and political uncertainty.

In 1996 the organisation underwent a metamorphosis of sorts when it signed up as a full member of BirdLife International. In 2008 the current Chief Executive Officer, Mark Anderson, was appointed to lead it. One of his first tasks was to assemble around him an Executive Committee (a de facto board) to assist him in the management of BirdLife South Africa. Just over four years ago that committee morphed into a properly constituted Board of Directors.

During the period of Mark's stewardship the organisation has developed exponentially. We have forged and nurtured many important relationships, enhanced our brand, marketing and outreach, and established ourselves as a respected and successful conservation organisation.

More specifically, in the year under review we have notched up numerous conservation successes. Our conservation staff are recognised as worldwide leaders in their respective fields of expertise. We have trained, and continue to train, community bird guides who contribute significantly to their clients' birding experience, especially in rural areas. Our magazine, *African Birdlife*, is regarded as one of the leading bird and birding magazines on the planet.

Our work is supported by an excellent and dedicated core staff without whom none of our achievements would have been possible. And last but not least, we have again managed to disclose in our financial statements a modest surplus.

Let me hasten to add that we do not take our recent and current success for granted. We could not have thrived without the generous and continuing encouragement of our many donors and friends, both personal and corporate, as well as the support of our partners in the conservation field and BirdLife International and The Royal Society for the Protection of Birds (RSPB).

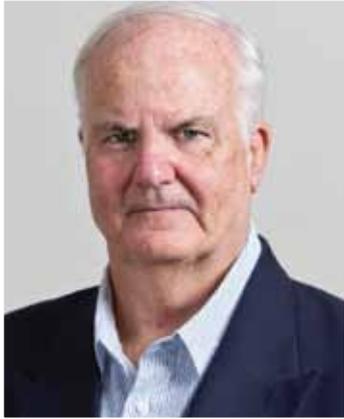
At our Annual General Meeting (AGM) on 11 May 2019 I shall step aside from the Board, having served my prescribed term of four years as Chairman. In doing so I express my deep appreciation to my colleagues and to Mark Anderson and his team, with whom I have always had a wonderful relationship.



**ROGER WANLESS**  
CHAIRMAN



**SOUTHERN BALD IBIS** MARTIN R. TAYLOR



ROB ASPELING (2)

“ We have forged and nurtured many important relationships, enhanced our brand, marketing and outreach, and established ourselves as a respected and successful conservation organisation ”

# Chief Executive Officer's Report

The year 2018 was another very successful one for BirdLife South Africa and we made excellent progress in all aspects of our work. This report summarises briefly some of our most important achievements.

**B**irdLife South Africa prides itself on its exceptionally good corporate governance. The Board of Directors met 10 times and the Audit & Risk Committee convened three times during 2018. In March, a very successful and well-attended AGM was held in Langebaan in the Western Cape. Board, organisation and conservation reviews were undertaken and included in our 2017 Annual Report, and summaries were presented to members at the AGM. Roger Wanless's four-year term as Chairman ends in May 2019 and I would like to express to him my sincerest appreciation for his leadership, commitment and hard work.

We held a very rewarding and interactive annual staff meeting, which included report-backs and team-building exercises, as well as the soft-skills training that had been identified as advantageous during the skills audit. During the year BirdLife South Africa also undertook its first-ever job satisfaction questionnaire. We submitted our second Employment Equity report to the Department of Labour and, since the previous reporting period, increased African representation in the organisation by 20 per cent. During a visit by the Department of Labour, our Contracts of Employment and other documents required to be in place were inspected and we passed with flying colours.

One of the main highlights of 2018 was ending the year with a small operating surplus, the ninth consecutive year we have done so. We are very grateful to our many donors, including our 39 Golden Bird Patrons who contributed a record R2-million of unrestricted funding to BirdLife South Africa in 2018. Our financial administration remains impeccable.

## Species conservation

With about 850 bird species in South Africa, of which 132 are threatened, we certainly have our work cut out for us. Strategising and prioritising are therefore important, which is why in 2018 we developed a comprehensive conservation strategy. The conservation programmes are also developing individual strategies and, after consultation with a range of experts and stakeholders, the Important Bird and Biodiversity Areas (IBA) strategy was completed in 2018.

Our focus is on South Africa's most threatened birds. We have, for example, made numerous breakthroughs that have contributed to our understanding of the biology of the Critically Endangered White-winged Flufftail by developing and implementing novel and innovative research and monitoring methods. The most important finding was the identification and recording of the species' call for the first time. Together with the discovery of its breeding in South Africa earlier in 2018, this has reshaped our understanding of the White-winged Flufftail and our ability to conserve this bird. Habitat management guidelines for the species will direct stewardship initiatives across its range in 2019.

Our Conservation Modelling Project has developed cutting-edge research that enables us to assess and monitor the state of South Africa's ecosystems and habitats. We can now track environmental change across landscapes and monitor the past, present and potential future responses of species or habitats to alterations in land cover and climate. By identifying core sites that form the base of resilient ecological networks, we enable conservation practitioners and land managers to develop and implement scientifically robust initiatives that promote positive change. Our landscape-level habitat project is resulting in the development of national species conservation projects, including on Rudd's, Botha's, Red and Barlow's larks, Yellow-breasted Pipit, Southern Bald Ibis, Ludwig's Bustard, Lesser Flamingo, Black Stork and White-backed Vulture.

As lead poisoning is one of the most important risks facing ever-dwindling vulture populations in Africa, we are studying its prevalence in South Africa's Cape and White-backed vultures. The results suggest that, unlike non-scavenging birds, these vultures are subjected to lead poisoning on a regular basis and the source is almost certainly ammunition. We have initiated multiple engagements with relevant parties, including SA Hunters, to mitigate this threat by substituting non-lead alternatives for the lead ammunition.



“With about 850 bird species in South Africa, of which 132 are threatened, we certainly have our work cut out for us ... which is why in 2018 we developed a comprehensive conservation strategy”



SAMANTHA RALSTON-PATON

*The increasing amount of power generated from wind energy in South Africa is welcome in light of our heavy dependence on coal. However, wind energy can negatively impact on birds. BirdLife South Africa's Birds & Renewable Energy Project helps ensure that wind turbines are located away from high-risk sites.*



BirdLife South Africa took steps to identify and secure Vulture Safe Zones, which are areas that support vulture populations in the absence of the main threats to these species.

The organisation engaged with the new developer and a prospective developer of the controversial proposed wind farm near Letšeng-La-Terae in Lesotho. Fortunately, based on the information we provided, it looks as if the project is on hold and hopefully will not proceed at all. Our *Guidelines for Cape Vultures and Wind Farms* (intended to provide direction for impact assessment monitoring and mitigation) was published and we are well on the way to having a clearer understanding of the species potentially at risk from wind turbines in South Africa.

In order to understand more about the Southern Banded Snake Eagle, we conducted field surveys of this Critically Endangered species across its distribution in the plantation matrix of northern KwaZulu-Natal. A new partnership with Forestry South Africa has enabled us to begin working with the forestry industry to understand how the plantation landscape can act as a potential alternative habitat for the conservation of this snake eagle and other raptors in northern KwaZulu-Natal. BirdLife South Africa, in collaboration with Eskom, has also established a Transformer Box Committee to tackle the electrocution risk that transformer boxes pose to Southern Banded Snake Eagles.

Our seabird conservationists continue to work globally. A Port-based Outreach (PBO) project was launched in Suva, Fiji, in January. The PBO officer stationed in the harbour engages with foreign vessels that operate on the high seas (where seabirds are more abundant and often fall victim to fishing operations) and dock in Suva port. This project also led to the establishment of a community-based project that empowers local women to make bird-scaring lines, which they can then sell to vessels docking in the harbour. At-sea trials and demonstrations of various devices, including different line weights, have been crucial to demonstrate to the fishing industry that mitigation measures do not affect catch rates and that incorporating them into fishing operations can be a win-win situation for the industry and the birds.

An extension of the PBO pilot project focused on capacity building in Fisheries Control Officers (FCOs) in South Africa. FCOs are responsible for inspecting fishing vessels in port and checking whether they comply with regulations. Crews are often unaware of what is required in terms of bycatch mitigation measures. More than 25 FCOs were trained and are now in a position to report non-compliance with seabird bycatch measures. An additional benefit of the extension is the comparison that can be drawn between the mitigation measures that FCOs record vessels using and the awareness discussions that the PBO officer conducted.

The Charl van der Merwe Trust (CVDMT) continued its support of BirdLife South Africa's African Penguin conservation work by committing another R1.6-million per year for the next three years. This funding will enable us to complete the 11-year project of alternately opening and closing certain islands to fishing and of gauging the impact of fishing on penguin foraging and breeding parameters. The CVDMT funding also supports our efforts, in collaboration with others, to put in place concrete, decision-making processes that will result in the implementation of an ecosystem-based approach to fisheries.

In March the five Albatross Task Force (ATF) teams (including our two ATF staff members) met in Mar del Plata, Argentina, to review project developments and plan future work. There is still much to do and we continue to work across several fleets, but the fact that the South African offshore trawl fishery has practically zero seabird bycatch means that more than 9000 seabirds are saved each year, thanks to our ongoing engagement.

The Mouse Free Marion project received a grant from the National Geographic Society to the value of US\$128 000. This grant will go a long way towards assisting with continued research and will enable us to dedicate more staff time to the project. The Mouse Free Marion 'Sponsor a hectare' website was launched and to date 289 hectares have been sponsored. New Zealander Keith Springer, an expert in the eradication of invasive species, visited Marion Island during the take-over voyage in April. He was able to inspect the terrain and assist the research team with certain trials before drafting a project plan and an operational plan, both of which will be invaluable to drive the initiative forward. They will also enable BirdLife South Africa and the Department of Environmental Affairs to clearly define the roles and responsibilities of those taking part in the project.

CapeNature approved the management plan that guides the attempt to re-establish an African Penguin colony at De Hoop Nature Reserve. This allowed work to start at

the former colony in October and by late December all the preparations for attracting the penguins back to the site were completed. A predator-proof fence was constructed, cameras for remote monitoring were installed and life-like decoys were put in place. This is all in an effort to convince the penguins that a colony already exists there – and that they should join it!

## Important Bird and Biodiversity Areas

In 2018 we leveraged R1.6-million funding from the WWF Nedbank Green Trust to finance the identification of South Africa's Key Biodiversity Areas (KBAs) and the establishment of KBA programmes in other African countries. Currently 10 African countries and two more outside the continent are being helped in this way. The South Africa KBA National Coordination Group was initiated in partnership with the South African National Biodiversity Institute (SANBI). Comprising a number of national taxa experts from the government and private sector, the group is co-chaired by BirdLife South Africa. The national KBA review process was started and in 2019 it is expected to result in a revised and rigorous network representing many taxa and ecosystems.

In 2018 we also focused attention on the Convention on Biological Diversity agenda (2010–2020), particularly its area-based conservation Aichi Target 11. This work included presenting at the Zoological Society of London's symposium on Safeguarding Space for Nature in the UK and at the Convention on Biological Diversity Conference of the Parties (COP14) in Egypt. We are now well placed to provide relevant case studies on Other Effective Areas-based Conservation Mechanisms (OECMs) and KBAs to inform international best-practice on these novel mechanisms.

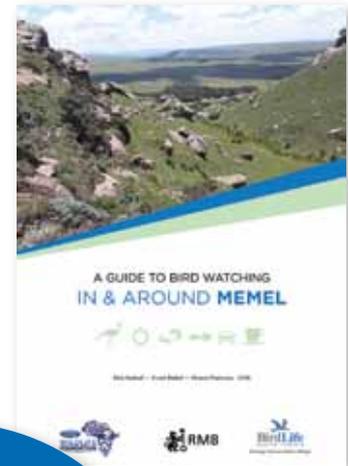
Considering the positive influence and relevance of BirdLife South Africa's conservation efforts in South Africa over the years, it has become clear that the organisation needs to expand its mandate by playing a bigger role in assisting other African countries to achieve their conservation goals. It is against this background that, at the beginning of 2018, BirdLife South Africa partnered with the International Union for Conservation of Nature's (IUCN) Species Survival Commission (SSC) to build capacity in four pilot African countries (Cameroon, Gabon, Kenya and Ethiopia) and thus empower them to complete national Red Listing of species and ecosystems. By using these datasets, these countries are then able to identify KBAs – sites that contribute significantly to the global persistence of biodiversity – within their borders. These foundational data will also help the pilot countries to, among other things, report on both national and international commitments, inform national policies and identify development sites that hold the least threat to biodiversity.

The proclamation of the Ingula Nature Reserve in 2018 marks the latest milestone achieved by the Ingula Partnership, an alliance between BirdLife South Africa, Middelpunt Wetland Trust and Eskom. The 8000-hectare nature reserve provides a core conservation area and acts as a catalyst for the owners of land around it, encouraging them to manage their properties on conservation-based principles. The declaration of more than 30 000 hectares as a protected area adjacent to Ingula is now being negotiated with landowners through Biodiversity Stewardship. The Upper Wilge Land Owners' Association was established in 2018 as the first step towards this declaration.

Through a strategic partnership with Conservation Outcomes and with funding from the Hans Hoheisen Charitable Trust, significant strides have been made to complete the protected area declarations of critical patches of the fragmented Mistbelt Grasslands in KwaZulu-Natal.

After several years of dedicated effort by our IBA team, the 9000-hectare Moutons-hoek Protected Environment was proclaimed. This brings up the IBA Programme's milestone of having negotiated the declaration of 100 000 hectares of protected areas over the past eight years. We raised R2.275-million to continue our efforts to conserve the Western Cape's estuaries.

We completed a report that measures the effectiveness of safeguarding terrestrial bird species within South Africa's protected areas. The report was submitted to SANBI and the results will be included in the National Biodiversity Assessment due to be published in 2019.



We published *A Guide to Bird Watching in & around Memel* to support the Sneeuwberg Protected Environment and promote avitourism around Memel. Our *Fences and Birds: Mitigating unintended impacts* publication intends to raise awareness about the impact of fences on birds.





MARTIN R. TAYLOR

Sakhmuzi Mhlongo is an ambassador for conservation in the southern Zululand area.

## Policy & Advocacy

Our Policy & Advocacy Manager was awarded the inaugural Pathfinder Award Special Commendation for her work on introducing South Africa's first biodiversity tax incentive, section 37D of the Income Tax Act, into the country's protected area network. The award celebrates innovation in the financing and resourcing of protected and conserved areas and the initiative was described as internationally unique, placing BirdLife South Africa at the global forefront of cutting-edge conservation work.

At the end of 2018 we received confirmation from the National Treasury that the formal process to amend the Income Tax Act again may begin in earnest. The aim of these legislative amendments is to create South Africa's second effective tax deduction dedicated to biodiversity conservation. This incredibly positive engagement comes on the back of the success of section 37D and has created the launch pad for further landmark innovations in the field of biodiversity finance.

BirdLife South Africa's Policy & Advocacy Programme, together with eight other coalition members represented by the Centre for Environmental Rights, worked tirelessly during the year on the Mabola case. Their cumulative efforts were richly rewarded with a victory in the High Court in Pretoria. The Mabola case saw a coalition of environmental and social NGOs seeking to prevent mining within one of South Africa's most strategic protected areas, the source of the Vaal, Tugela and Pongola rivers. This High Court judgment set an important legal precedent for South Africa's critical environmental sites and was a strategic victory for a sustainable future.

## Regional work

Largely with support from the RSPB, BirdLife South Africa continued to play an important role in the region, providing assistance with matters relating to seabird conservation, KBAs, renewable energy and policy and advocacy. It is anticipated that our regional (and in fact international) involvement will continue to grow. We continued to assist BirdLife Zimbabwe as a Supporting Partner, with funding from the RSPB, and it is encouraging to see that the organisation is in an increasingly secure position.

## Avitourism

Five bird guides (trained with funding from Airports Company South Africa; ACSA) have been placed in learnership positions at four lodges in the Lowveld. A contract has been concluded with the Peace Parks Foundation to undertake avitourism feasibility studies at three of its Transfrontier Conservation Areas (Lubombo, Kavango Zambezi and Kgalagadi).

## Membership

During her sabbatical, our Membership Programme Manager joined the membership team of Burung Indonesia for three weeks to assist in setting up its membership programme, giving advice and providing options for membership database programmes. During the past year we manned a stand at the Getaway Show, creating awareness about BirdLife South Africa and recruiting new members. Shop for the Birds! (BirdLife South Africa's shop at Isdell House, its head office in Johannesburg) has grown and is increasing in popularity. The range of items sold includes field guides, T-shirts, Bird of the Year items, stationery and children's books and toys. BirdLife South Africa continues to have a very good relationship with its 37 affiliated bird clubs, with talks being regularly presented to the clubs. The three bird club forums met regularly and BirdLife South Africa representatives attended each meeting.

## Marketing and awareness

Six issues of our world-class *African Birdlife* magazine were published and distributed to our members and subscribers. The magazine was also available in a growing number of retail outlets.

We grew our reach significantly on Facebook, Instagram and Twitter during the past year and now connect with tens of thousands of people, many of whom had previously not been exposed to birds, birding or BirdLife South Africa. Our Facebook page and group have more than 17 000 and 31 000 followers respectively (increases of 36 and 37 per cent since late 2017).



Our monthly e-newsletter is e-mailed to approximately 10 000 people. Our website has undergone a massive upgrade and the new and vastly improved platform will be launched early in 2019.

With the assistance of Utopia, our advertising agency, and Flume, a digital marketing agency, we continue to receive recognition and raise awareness, including through our Think Birds/Love Birds campaign. We have 12 Citilite billboards that move around South Africa. We have posted a number of clever Think Birds adverts on social media (including adverts/posts on Endangered Species Day, Star Wars Day and World UFO Day, Halloween and Boobies). We secured free full-page adverts in *Glamour* and *House & Garden* magazines.

## Education

Through the National Lotteries Biodiversity Stewardship Project, we were able to reach 35 schools (11 000 learners and 400 teachers) and created a contracted position for one of our local guides, who assisted with the implementation of this project. Our three Junior Bird Clubs reach just over 200 children each week.

## Events

We hosted a very successful Flock on the West Coast and Learn About Birds (LAB) Conference at Langebaan in March.

The Flufftail Festival held at the Johannesburg Zoo, in collaboration with Water Wise (Rand Water) and the Rare Finch Conservation Group, raised awareness for water, wetland and waterbird conservation. The specific day for schools at the annual festival was 1 June, when more than 400 Grade 6 learners from five Soweto-based primary schools were hosted at the zoo.

Lesson plans and other materials were developed for Bird of the Year 2018, the African Black Oystercatcher, by the talented author and artist Chrissie Cloete. A poster was compiled and distributed in *African Birdlife* magazine and merchandise, including pin badges, T-shirts and soft toys, was sold in Shop for the Birds! and at various events.

The African Bird Fair took place once again at the Walter Sisulu National Botanical Garden and was a huge success. A number of other events were held in 2018, including the Birdathon, Owl Awards, Birding Big Day and two Golden Bird Patron events.

## BirdLife South Africa's properties

We remain proud of Isdell House, our magnificent head office in Johannesburg. During the past year we acquired more donated artworks, which now adorn its walls. The indigenous plants have flourished and, following our example, many people have been encouraged to start bird-friendly, water-wise and indigenous gardens. We now have 21 solar panels on the roof of Isdell House and we are 'off the grid' for several hours a day. During 2018 we began fundraising to acquire a Cape Town office and have raised R2-million so far.

The Wakkerstroom Education and Tourism Centre was upgraded with generous donations of materials from Promac Paints, Italtile and Belgotex. Steve Davis also made a donation to the Centre in honour of Roy Cowgill. The centre continues to appreciate the support of Wakkerstroom residents and associations, which increases from year to year. Residents make an impressive contribution by supporting the centre's recycling programme. More than 3.5 tons of recyclables were collected during 2018, so these items did not end up in a landfill or elsewhere.

This report provides a summary of the large number of diverse activities undertaken by BirdLife South Africa. It is clear that through the hard work and dedication of our staff and volunteers and the support of our collaborators and donors, we are without doubt making a significant contribution to the conservation of South Africa's birds and their habitats.

**MARK D. ANDERSON**  
CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER

“ Through the National Lotteries Biodiversity Stewardship Project, we were able to reach 35 schools (11 000 learners and 400 teachers) ”



TANIA ANDERSON (2)

*Isdell House is BirdLife South Africa's magnificent head office in Dunkeld West, Johannesburg.*

## Looking Ahead

Although this annual report summarises BirdLife South Africa's work during 2018, it is appropriate to provide brief details of some of the work planned for 2019.

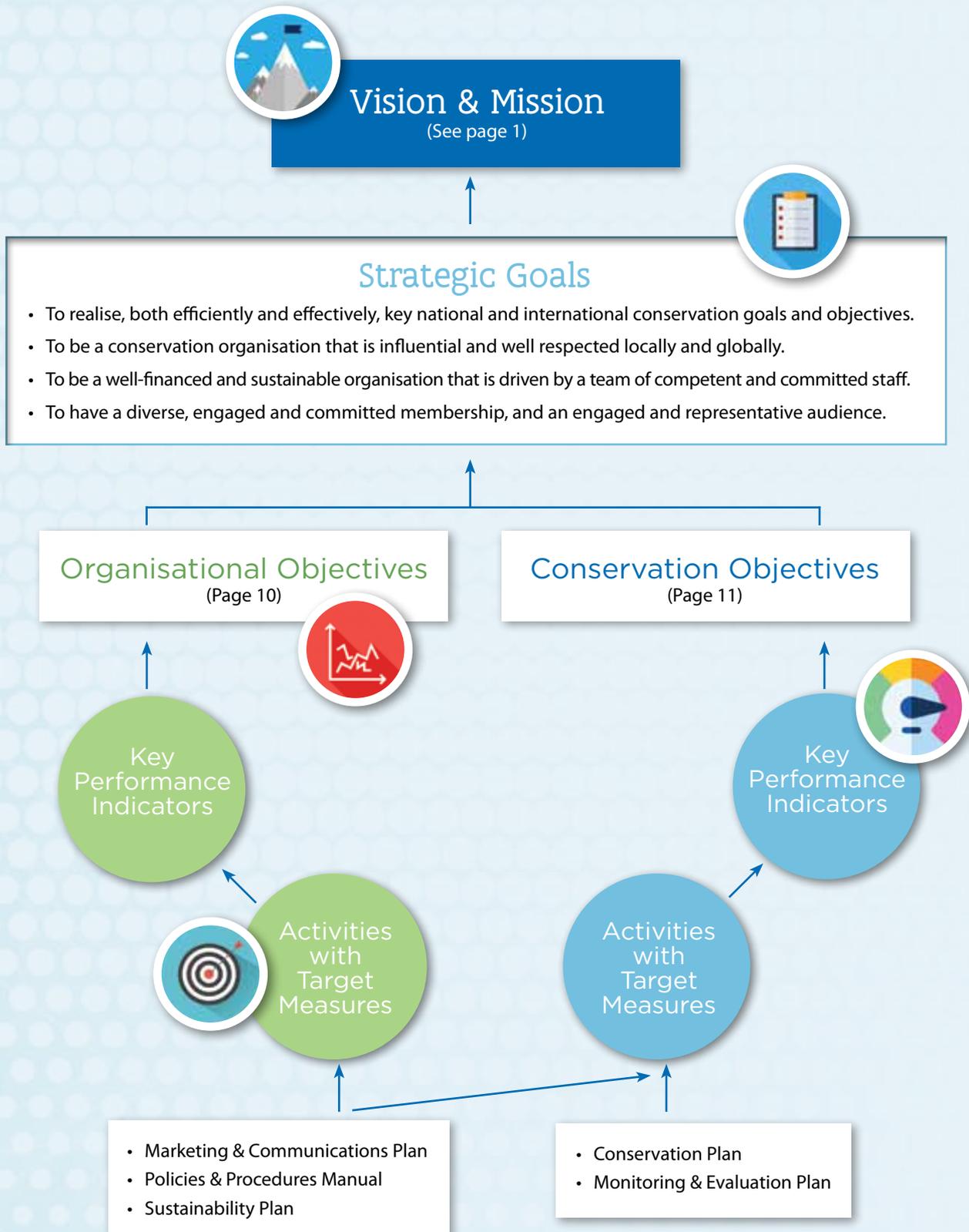


SECRETARYBIRD ALBERT FRONEMAN

1. Impeccable financial administration and good corporate governance will continue to remain the cornerstones of BirdLife South Africa's work.
2. The current economic climate is not conducive to raising money, so we will work harder and be innovative in our fundraising efforts. Our Fundraising Committee will meet regularly and we will plan and implement fundraising opportunities.
3. Our fundraising priorities include ensuring that our core costs are met, that all positions are funded and that funding is available for priority conservation projects. Some of the fundraising activities for 2019 will consist of a raffle (which could raise R400 000), a Conservation League Donor recruitment campaign and a collaborative event at Arderne Gardens in Cape Town. To ensure the continued sustainability of our organisation, we will promote our Legacy Project, introduce the concept of endowed positions and raise funds for the BirdLife National Trust. We will also continue to raise funds for the purchase of a Cape Town office.
4. Fundraising for the Mouse Free Marion project will remain a priority.
5. Our marketing and awareness work will continue, including on our 'Think Birds' campaign and the production of our world-class, bi-monthly *African Birdlife* magazine, and we will promote awareness of the Secretarybird, Bird of the Year in 2019. We will actively promote our organisation, birds and bird conservation using Facebook, Instagram, Twitter and other social media.
6. We will host a number of important events, such as The African Bird Fair and Birding Big Day.
7. BirdLife South Africa will continue to promote avitourism in southern Africa as an important job creator and economic activity, and we will provide support to the community bird guides. With funding from ACSA and possibly other donors, we will train new bird guides.
8. Another staff skills audit will be undertaken and identified training will take place at the annual staff meeting in May.
9. We will fulfil our governance obligations and hold bi-monthly Board meetings, tri-annual Audit & Risk Committee meetings and our AGM. We will meet our statutory obligations, including the annual financial audit. We will report to the Department of Labour on our employment equity obligations. A Chairman and a Treasurer will be elected at our AGM in May.
10. As BirdLife South Africa's affiliated bird clubs and members are the backbone of our organisation, we will continue to assist bird clubs with membership administration, attend bird club and forum meetings and communicate through a variety of media with our members and birders in general.
11. A number of vacant positions will be filled in 2019, such as the Conservation Manager, Seabird Conservation Programme Manager and Membership Administrator.
12. We will continue to nurture our relationship with other conservation NGOs, academic institutions and relevant government departments and we will work closely with the RSPB and BirdLife International.
13. The appointment of a Conservation Manager will provide an opportunity to re-examine the structure of our Conservation Division and to revisit our Conservation Strategy.
14. BirdLife South Africa's foremost priority remains the implementation of conservation actions to ensure the protection of South Africa's birds and their habitats. All our conservation work will be guided by the best scientific information.

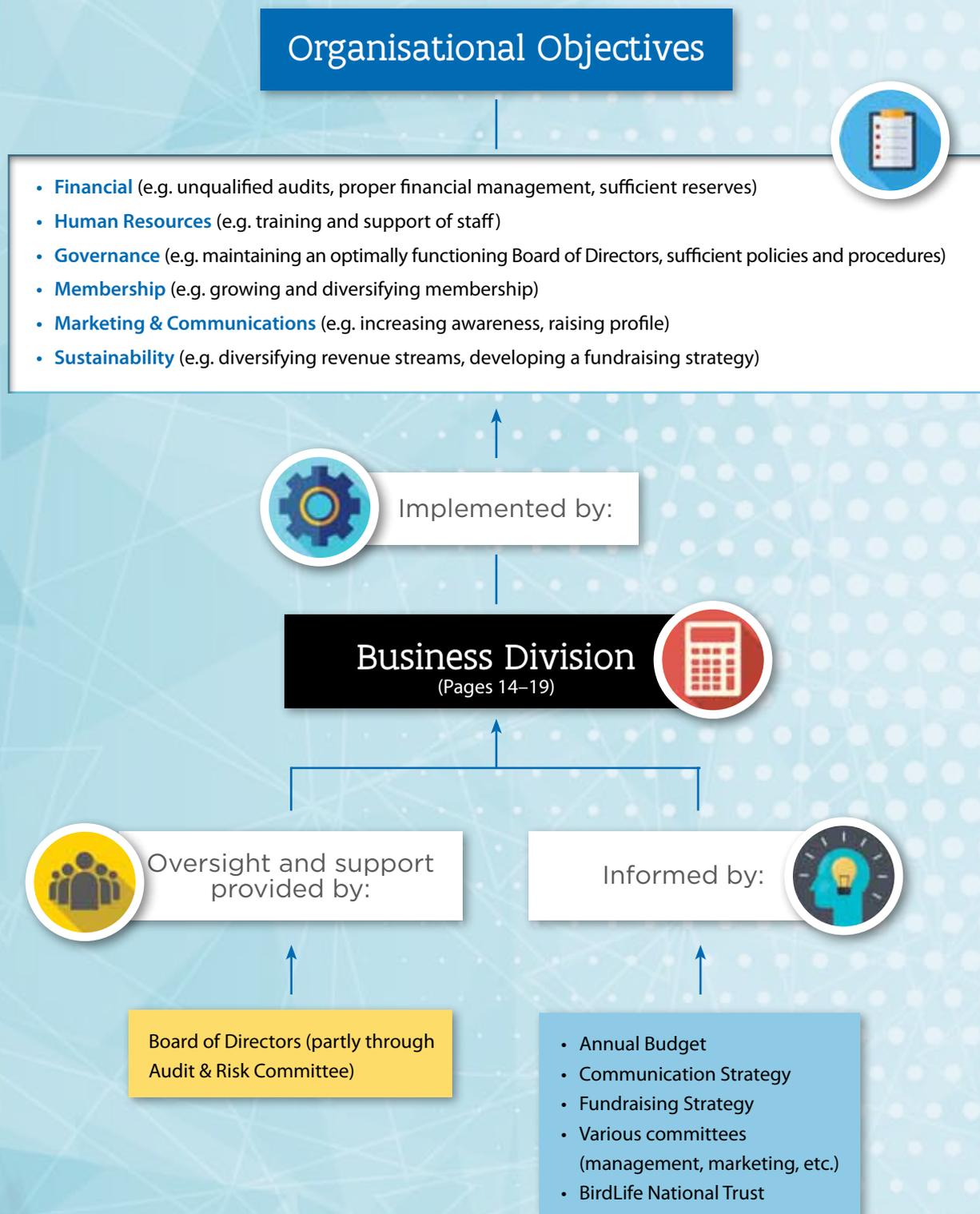
# Strategic Framework

The ultimate aim of BirdLife South Africa's work is to fulfil the organisation's vision and mission. Strategic goals have been set that, if attained, would contribute to the achievement of the vision and mission. On an annual basis, both conservation and organisational objectives are formulated. All activities undertaken by the organisation are geared to achieving these objectives. The achievement of them is measured by key performance indicators. Certain key plans have been drafted that serve as guidelines for activities.



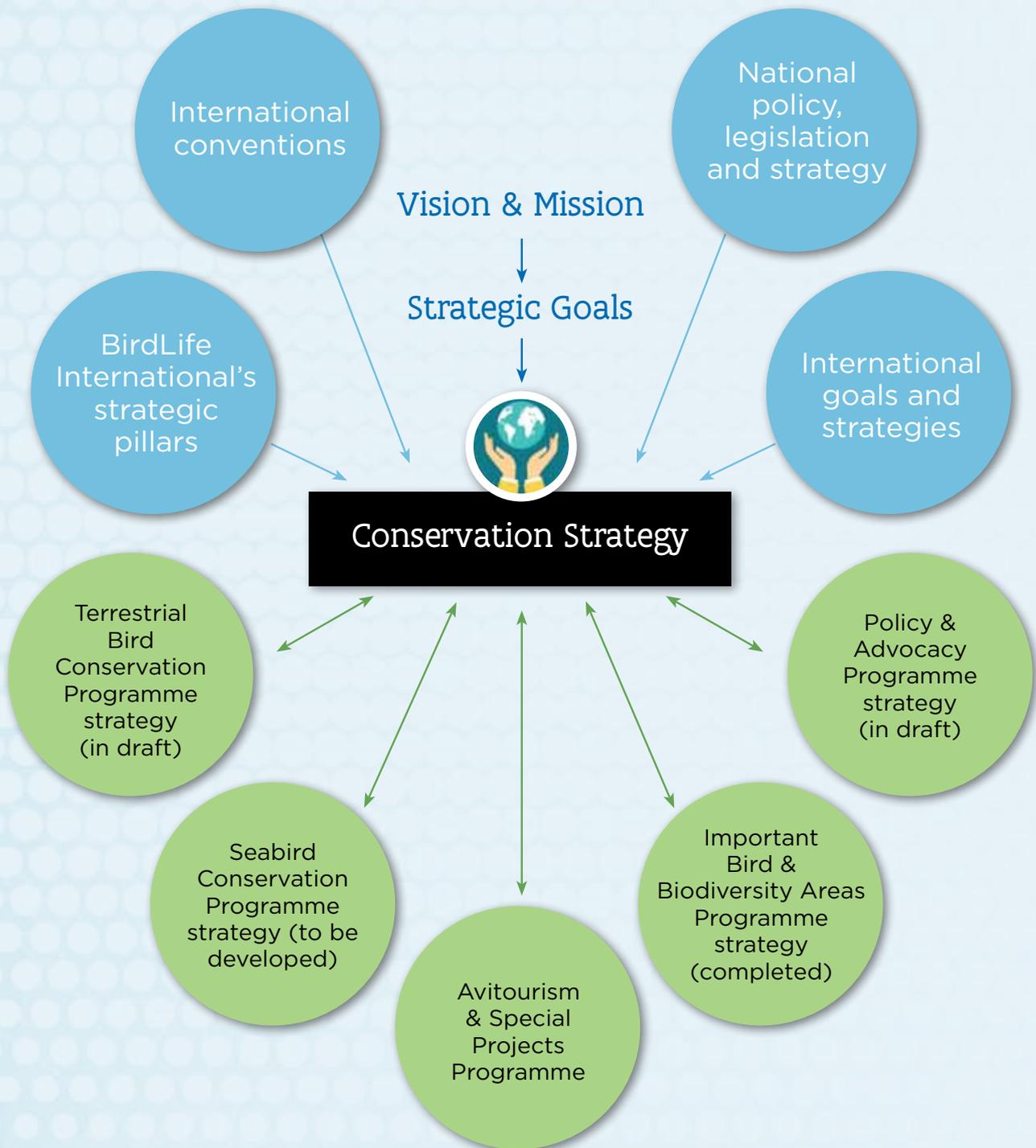
# Organisational Objectives

Organisational objectives are classified under key functionalities (Financial, Human Resources, etc.). Activities aimed at achieving these objectives are implemented by the Business Division. The Board of Directors directly (and indirectly through the Audit & Risk Committee) provides oversight and guidance to the Business Division.



# Conservation Objectives

In 2018 BirdLife South Africa completed a strategy document that will guide the conservation work of the organisation over the next four years. The process took into account the global priorities of BirdLife International, while also focusing on conservation needs at a provincial and national level. It is hoped that this strategy will guide the organisation and enable it to efficiently and effectively realise key conservation goals and objectives that will contribute to the long-term conservation of South Africa's avifauna.



BirdLife South Africa's vision, mission and strategic goals provide the parameters for the organisation's Conservation Strategy. Within these parameters, the strategy is informed by international conventions, BirdLife International's strategic goals, national policy and international goals and strategies. BirdLife South Africa's conservation programmes are also developing strategies; they detail the programme's work and support the implementation of the Conservation Strategy.

# Organisational Structure



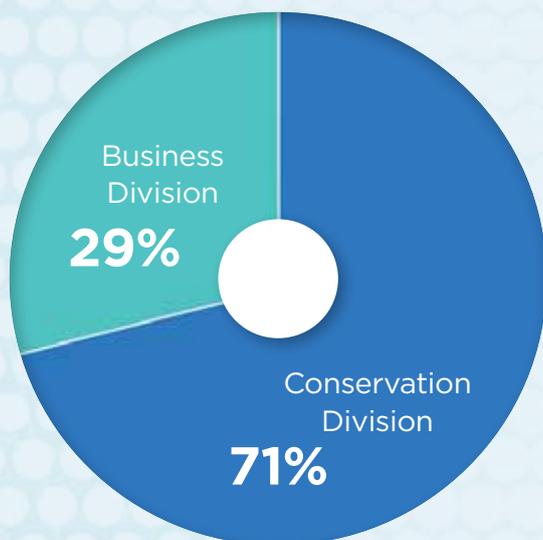
# Division of Expenses and Sources of Funding

BirdLife South Africa maintains a strict policy whereby all conservation work is supported by project-specific funding. No conservation work is undertaken without the necessary funding being in place. Furthermore, except for pre-approved administration fees, no conservation funding or donations are used to fund Business Division activities. The organisation prides itself on maintaining the highest standard of project management and reporting, which includes updating funders with regard to project activities and spending.

## Overview

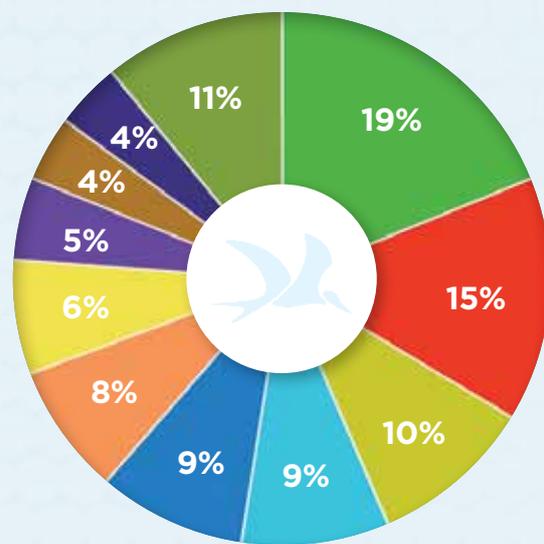
BirdLife South Africa continues to be financially sustainable in the face of challenging economic times, partly due to its maintenance of very diverse revenue streams, with no over-reliance on any individual source of funding.

Split between Business Division and Conservation Division expenses for 2018



- **Conservation Division**  
R 26 028 069
- **Business Division**  
R 10 849 381

Total sources of funding for 2018



Sources	R'000
Local corporate funding	6126
International institutions/foundations	4910
Government and parastatals	3373
Local charitable trusts	3020
Publication income	2914
International BirdLife partners	2626
Golden Bird Patrons	2068
Events	1629
Donations	1250
Individual funders	1249
Other	3763

## Core and Membership

Core (a shortened term for the finance and operations functions) staff are responsible for working behind the scenes to ensure the organisation runs smoothly. Functions that are included under Core include executive management, financial management, bookkeeping, human resources, office administration and reception. Core activities are planned, implemented and assessed during monthly management committee meetings, attended by the Chief Executive Officer, Finance & Operations Manager and Human Resources Manager.

### Membership

BirdLife South Africa is a membership-based organisation for two main reasons. Firstly, our community of members increases our reach across South Africa. Active members are our eyes and ears in places out of reach of our limited staff complement. Secondly, being a membership-based organisation is one of the requirements to become (and remain) a partner of BirdLife International.

The number of members decreased slightly during 2018 from 4109 to 3767, in all likelihood due to the challenging economic climate in South Africa. At the end of December 2108 there were 37 bird clubs affiliated to BirdLife South Africa, which brought in an additional 1657 members of BirdLife South Africa through their membership of these bird clubs. Thus the total number of members of our organisation is 5424. In addition, there are 741 direct subscribers to *African Birdlife* magazine who are not members of BirdLife South Africa.

Bird clubs are frequently the entry points for budding birdwatchers to learn about birds, often from experts during outings to local and more distant sites. Clubs also arrange courses – aimed at beginners or more seasoned birders – on subjects that range from bird photography to the identification of LBJs. Most clubs hold monthly meetings at which guest speakers are invited to talk about bird-related topics. Affiliated clubs play an important intermediary role between BirdLife South Africa and members. As the contact point between the two parties, they encourage members to identify, monitor and address key environmental threats in their local areas. Thus, individuals can develop from recreational birders to active conservationists, spreading the message of conservation around the country.

During 2018 BirdLife South Africa's Membership Programme recruited new members at the Getaway Show, The African Bird Fair, the AEWA Meeting of the Parties in Durban, the Ninth Oppenheimer De Beers Group Research Conference and other events held at Isdell House.

The organisation undertook another very successful recruitment drive for Conservation League Donors and by 31 December 2018 we had received donations from 177 generous supporters. This income source has once again proven crucial to maintaining BirdLife South Africa's favourable financial position.



MARK D. ANDERSON

“ BirdLife South Africa is a membership-based organisation ... our community of members increases our reach across South Africa. Active members are our eyes and ears in places out of reach of our staff ”



## African Birdlife

The number of subscribers to *African Birdlife* continued to grow in 2018 and the presence of the magazine in more retail outlets resulted in improved sales figures. Mainstream print magazines in South Africa continued to experience disastrous trading conditions during this period and many major titles showed catastrophic declines in readership, either closing down or changing to an online presence.

So the fact that *African Birdlife* continued to exhibit even a modest growth in circulation is positive. It is likely that the magazine's position as a niche title with a committed core readership helped to buffer it from the drop-off suffered by titles of more general interest.

The challenging trading conditions in South Africa exerted considerable pressure on the magazine's advertising sales teams. Faced with much tighter budgets, advertisers are looking for ways in which they can get added value for their spend to maximise their returns.

Bulk sales of the magazine to selected accommodation establishments in southern Africa and the rest of the continent proved highly successful. The number of hotels and lodges signing up grew monthly and this had a positive effect on sales figures.

The uptake of subscriptions to the digital version of the magazine continued to be slow.

In a bid to generate greater exposure for the magazine, more retail outlets were added by the distributor and sales were incentivised by the inclusion of inserts such as the Bird of the Year 2018 poster.

The *African Birdlife* team once again produced a large-format calendar, sponsored by Sasol, which sold out and made a small profit.

## Ostrich

Confidence in *Ostrich* by its publisher, NISC, saw the annual allotment of issues increase from three to four in 2018, which resulted in the publication of 53 articles of various types. In addition to two regular issues, two special issues appeared. The first was made up of selected articles from the Pan African Ornithological Congress (2016), while the second was titled *Hot Birds: Birds of Africa's Arid Zones* and was compiled by guest editor Susan Cunningham.

To recognise the contribution of authors to the success of the journal, two award schemes were implemented. The first 'Ostrich' award was presented to Colleen Downs at Flock 2018 in recognition of her contribution: six articles published in two years and more in press. In addition, the journal ran its first Best Student Paper competition, which was won by Bukola Braimoh. In January 2019 she was presented with an award for her article 'Managing human disturbance: factors influencing flight-initiation distance of birds in a West African nature reserve'.

*Ostrich* would not be the success it is without the contributions of its associate editors and support staff, which saw a few changes during 2018. Melissa Whitecross was appointed to the newly created deputy editor-in-chief role to assist Alan Lee. Caroline Howes took over from Chevonne Reynolds as social media manager, keeping @ostrichJAO alive and growing, while Chevonne will be the guest editor for 2019's planned special issue on Africa's waterbirds. Robert Crawford retired as associate editor and has been replaced by Jerry Huntley from the American Museum of Natural History, who has experience in the field of molecular phylogenetics.

Overall, the journal's impact factor dipped slightly from the 2017 record of 0.833 to 0.616. Nevertheless, this is still the second highest impact factor of *Ostrich's* history and it continues to be Africa's leading ornithological journal.



## 2018 Calendars

Calendars were once again sold in 2018, with the income from their sale contributing to the sustainability of *African Birdlife* magazine.



# Events and Marketing

**646**  
species

**1200**  
participants

Birding **BIG** day

## Birding Big Day

Birding Big Day 2018, held on Saturday, 24 November, was a huge success. More than 1200 people recorded 646 species and logged close to 42 000 sightings on the mobile app BirdLasser. The day was a true celebration of birds and birding in South Africa and close to R100 000 was raised for bird conservation.

close to  
**R100 000**  
raised



TONI GEDDES (2)



## Flufftail Festival

The 2018 Flufftail Festival took on a different format from previously in that it comprised a Family Day, on 21 April, and a Schools Day, on 1 June. Both days were hosted by Joburg Zoo. On the Family Day visitors were invited to take part in a scavenger hunt, answering questions and playing games at three stations to earn stamps and stand a chance to win a range of prizes. The stations were Wetlands, manned by our colleagues in the Water Wise team, who told visitors about the services wetlands provide; Hippo, manned by the Johannesburg City Parks team, who talked about the threats to wetlands; and Flamingo, manned by the BirdLife South Africa team, who discussed the bird species that live in wetlands, especially the White-winged Flufftail.

On Schools Day about 480 Grade 6 pupils from schools in Soweto and Johannesburg descended on the zoo. They too visited three stations: Hippo; Wetlands and Flamingo combined; and the Puppet Show station, which presented a performance of 'Waxi the Hero', created by the Rare Finch Conservation Group.

BirdLife South Africa partnered with Rand Water's Water Wise team, Johannesburg City Parks and Zoo, the Department of Environmental Affairs, the Rare Finch Conservation Group and HDI Youth Marketeers to put together the programmes for both days to highlight the importance of conserving wetlands and waterbirds.



ALBERT FRONEMAN (2)

## Flock on the West Coast

Flock on the West Coast took place at Club Mykonos Resort in Langebaan from 6 to 11 March. The event consisted of BirdLife South Africa's fourth bi-annual Learn About Birds (LAB) Conference, which was co-hosted by BirdLife South Africa and the Fitz-Patrick Institute of African Ornithology, as well as the annual BirdLife South Africa AGM. Other attractions during the 2018 Flock included workshops and guided excursions that ranged from boat trips out into Saldanha Bay to overland excursions to West Coast National Park and the Groot Winterhoek Wilderness Area.



MELISSA WHITECROSS



ALBERT FRONEMAN

## Owl Awards

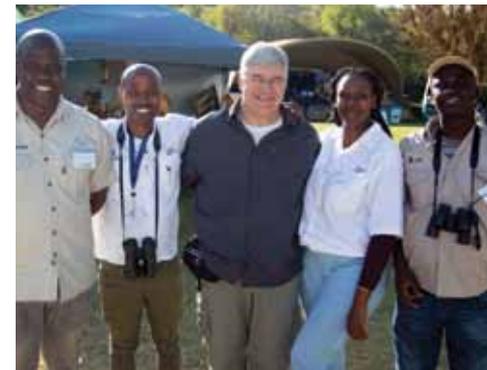
The annual Owl Awards presentation took place at Isdell House on 28 June. The purpose of the Owl Awards is to recognise the remarkable achievements of individuals and organisations committed to protecting South Africa's birds and their habitats.

## The African Bird Fair

Over the weekend of 8 and 9 September The African Bird Fair was held at the Walter Sisulu National Botanical Garden. Lots of people attended, despite the cold weather, and we were able to reach a wide audience and inspire participants to care about birds and the environment.

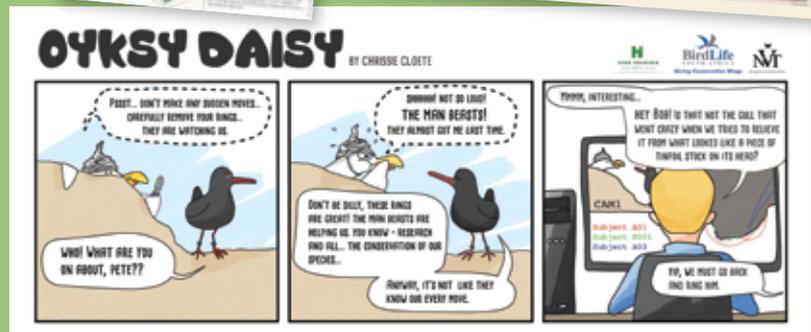


MARK D. ANDERSON (3)



## Bird of the Year

The African Black Oystercatcher was the Bird of the Year in 2018. Social media posts created awareness about this distinctive species and BirdLife South Africa, together with the Nature's Valley Trust and artist Chrissie Cloete and with funding from the Hans Hoheisen Charitable Trust and Hawarden Trust, developed a series of educational tools and lesson plans. Pin badges and T-shirts were also produced and sold in Shop for the Birds!





“ ‘Think Birds’ has been a good strategy with a solid, engaging creative idea and good execution ”

### Marketing

Apart from the events organised by BirdLife South Africa, most of the marketing effort in 2018 went into our ‘Think Birds’ campaign, which aired on outdoor media for a second year and on social and print media, as well as on radio. The outdoor media included roadside billboards and digital screens in shopping malls, bars and restaurants, with the support of JCDcaux, the international outdoor media company. The billboards caught the attention of branding and advertising guru Andy Rice, who awarded the campaign a ‘Hero’ accolade in the feature ‘Heroes and Zeros’ on the 702 and 567 Cape Talk radio programme *The Money Show*.

The concept was expanded into radio, with three 30-second scripts – Petrel, Kite and Crane – written by our pro bono ad agency, Utopia. With voice-overs by John Maytham and Nancy Richards, these were recorded with the assistance of Milestone Studios. MindShare World, our pro bono media placement agency, secured a good spread of flightings on national, regional and community radio stations around the country. The value to media costs amounted to more than R400 000.

With witty tactical executions across several platforms of social media, the campaign was extended even further. Animation courtesy of Flume Digital Marketing added an extra dimension. The first posting, ‘When will the tide tern?’ for Endangered Species Awareness Day, had more than 1000 views in 24 hours. In print media, a specially created full page advert with the ‘Think Birds’ concept was carried on the inside back cover of several issues of *African Birdlife*.

‘Think Birds’ has been a good strategy with a solid, engaging creative idea and good execution. It has the legs to run even further into 2019, helping to increase awareness of birds and BirdLife South Africa across a varied target market.



In addition to the ‘Think Birds’ campaign, we partnered with M-Net Channel 101 on a 12-episode series called *The Wild Ones* that aired on Sundays. We created social media posts from each episode and asked engaging questions about the birds that occurred in them. These posts went out on M-Net and BirdLife South Africa social media platforms, encouraging viewers to watch the series. Weekly prize winners received the book *Robins of Africa*, along with BirdLife South Africa marketing material.

# The Wakkerstroom Tourism and Education Centre

The Wakkerstroom Tourism and Education Centre fulfils many roles and objectives in the immediate and broader community of Wakkerstroom. It raises the profile of BirdLife South Africa by fostering relationships beyond our borders and is empowering people for positive change. Below is a summary of the activities undertaken during 2018.

## Avitourism

Avitourism continues to soar in Wakkerstroom. The centre's resident guide is in high demand as he has become well known for his ability to track down sought-after local species. The freelance guides in the area also continue to expand their operations, catering for South African and international guests.

## Facilities

The centre's accommodation facilities remain popular during summer when birding is at its peak. A generous bequest has enabled us to make improvements and we have carpeted the centre extensively, tiled passageways, bathrooms and verandas, purchased much-needed maintenance equipment and added some soft touches to the guest suites.

## Building local relationships

Various interest groups and local associations were hosted at the centre in 2018, including the Wakkerstroom Bird Club, the Wakkerstroom Natural Heritage Association, the Seme Fire Protection Association and the BirdLife South Africa Board of Directors.

BirdLife South Africa serves on the Wakkerstroom Bird Club and Wakkerstroom Natural Heritage Association committees where it manages:

- the Junior Bird Clubs, which consist of three groups located in Volksrust and eSizameleni;
- the Junior Ambassadors' Programme, which opens the natural world to the young people of Wakkerstroom;
- the annual Sandy Twomey Photographic Competition, now in its fourth year.

We continue to support the Wakkerstroom Tourism Association in its efforts to attract visitors to the broader area through events and activities that appeal to different interest groups.



KRISTI GARLAND (3)

## Environmental education

Having received funding from the National Lotteries Commission for 2018, we were able to take the message of conservation to 35 schools across southern Mpumalanga and northern KwaZulu-Natal, reaching 11 000 learners and more than 400 teachers. The teachers attended training workshops throughout the year where they were shown how to implement Biodiversity

Stewardship, ensuring cross-curriculum learning. The learners were involved in various practical activities in and around their school premises, thereby reinforcing the theory they had learnt in the classroom. For many of them it was the first time they had held a pair of binoculars, let alone used a field guide to identify a bird.

Our Junior Bird Clubs also grew from strength to strength over the year, with close to 220 learners in three clubs meeting once a week to enjoy the world that birds were revealing to them.



above *The Wakkerstroom Centre seen from the surrounding grassland.*

below, left *Learners in the Wakkerstroom area are getting to know about birds.*



## Working on Fire

The support for our locally based Working on Fire team continues to grow, with more subsistence farmers joining the association and making use of the team. Only one major fire was recorded in 2018. The team has also increased its awareness activities in the local community.

## Looking ahead

Exciting events planned for 2019 include an adventure trail through town, our first star-gazing event, a series of bird talks and the annual Bio-bash. Funding sources are still being sought for the centre and its activities.

# Policy & Advocacy



M. FISCHBORN

Candice Stevens and a representative of the South African government receive the Pathfinder Award in Egypt.

The Policy & Advocacy (P&A) Programme has continued to grow since its reconstitution two years ago. 2018 saw high-impact projects and international achievements that are enhancing opportunities and responding to challenges facing BirdLife South Africa’s conservation investment. Our work seeks to influence policy and advocate for its implementation so as to help achieve our strategic objectives for landscapes, species and people. While specific conservation action projects are important, laws and environmental policy set the wider framework into which all conservation efforts fit. The P&A Programme’s efforts aim to create far-reaching consequences across sites and species.

## Pathfinder Award

BirdLife South Africa’s Policy & Advocacy Manager, Candice Stevens, together with the government of South Africa, was awarded the international Pathfinder Award Special Commendation for her work on introducing South Africa’s first biodiversity tax incentive, section 37D of the Income Tax Act. The award celebrates innovation in the financing and resourcing of protected and conserved areas and was presented during the United Nations Convention on Biological Diversity COP14 in Egypt. The United Nations Development Programme described this work as internationally unique, placing BirdLife South Africa at the global forefront of cutting-edge conservation work. ([www.birdlife.org/worldwide/news/birdlife-south-africa%E2%80%99s-candice-stevens-wins-global-pathfinder-award](http://www.birdlife.org/worldwide/news/birdlife-south-africa%E2%80%99s-candice-stevens-wins-global-pathfinder-award))

## Defining Conservation Areas

At the request of the IUCN, the P&A and IBA programmes are jointly running a globally important project regarding Biodiversity Aichi Target 11, the international measure for protected and conserved areas. The aim of the project is to undertake the first country-level assessment of Conservation Areas, also referred to as Other Effective Area-Based Conservation Measures (OECMs). Conservation Areas form an integral part of area-based conservation, but until now have not been fully understood, investigated or reported on. The P&A Programme is leading this innovative policy implementation, which promises to create a broader framework for the protection and management of landscapes across South Africa and internationally.

### BirdLife South Africa’s Fiscal Benefits Project Biodiversity Tax Incentive



**A NATIONAL 1st**  
First successful biodiversity tax incentive in South Africa.



**REWARDS**  
Offers landowners a financial reward for their conservation commitment when declaring Nature Reserves on privately and communally owned land.



**TAX BENEFIT**  
Landowners can deduct the value of the land they declare as a Protected Area from their taxable income.



**CONSERVATION**  
This new biodiversity tax incentive protects birds and their habitats by formally protecting Key Biodiversity Areas and providing financial sustainability to do so.



CANDICE STEVENS

## The Mabola case win

Following the granting of ministerial permission to build a coal mine in the Mabola Protected Environment in 2016, a coalition of environmental and social NGOs formed to present a legal challenge to this decision. The Mabola Protected Environment is an Important Bird and Biodiversity Area (IBA)/Key Biodiversity Area (KBA) and a Strategic Water Source Area, and was the recipient of considerable conservation investment by BirdLife South Africa to formally protect it. Although the mining right had been granted without public participation, the case has been fraught with challenges. Nevertheless, a landmark judgment handed down in the Pretoria High Court set aside the ministerial permission granted to mine. This victory forces the State to account for the environmental importance and sensitivity of the site and its significance for local communities. The judgment has substantial implications with regard to the legal status of protected areas in South Africa and has set a vital precedent. BirdLife South Africa is proud to have formed part of this coalition that defended South Africa’s right to the environment. (<https://mabola.cer.org.za/>)

## A first for proactive advocacy

The P&A Programme has launched an exciting new project that will change the face of proactive advocacy work in South Africa. BirdLife South Africa, together with SANBI, is developing Best Practice Guidelines for Species Impact Assessments. These are the first of their kind and form an integral part of the Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) process, which guides development within sensitive areas. Guidelines for six different taxa, including birds, will be developed and taken up by government. These Best Practice Guidelines will fill a vital gap in national advocacy work and ensure that developments have appropriate standards that consider impacts on threatened species and ecosystems. It is envisaged that the lessons and successes of this project may be replicated across the continent.



NATURE'S VALLEY TRUST

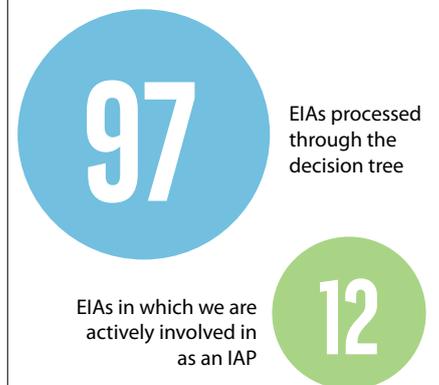
## Vacation work programme

The P&A Programme initiated BirdLife South Africa's first vacation work programme, which aims to offer an opportunity for university students to gain first-hand experience of what it means to work for a conservation NGO and to learn about the professional work environment. Honours or Master's students spend two weeks during their university holidays shadowing and working with our conservation staff and gain important career skills and capacity development. While a popular model in sectors such as law and finance, this type of initiative requires more emphasis within the conservation sector. The programme focuses on female

B-BBEE candidates, a demographic underrepresented in the conservation sector. The first candidate, Elelwani Makhuvha, an Honours student from Wits University, joined the P&A Programme in July 2018 and was given exposure to the fields of innovative conservation finance, environmental legislation and policy, public and private sector engagement, and the day-to-day operations of BirdLife South Africa. The candidacy was an enormously positive experience for all involved and Elelwani has gone on to undertake a full internship with the Nature's Valley Trust.

left Elelwani Makhuvha, BirdLife South Africa's first vacation work candidate.

In 2018 we passed 97 Environmental Impact Assessments through our decision tree in order to determine our level of involvement as an Interested and Affected Party (IAP). Of these, we became actively involved in 12 cases. The map below shows the locations and names of some of our most important cases for the year, none of which have been concluded.



ACTIVE ADVOCACY SITES FOR BIRDLIFE SOUTH AFRICA, 2018.

1. Bongani Minerals's application to mine tungsten in the Moutonshoek Protected Environment
2. The Polihali Dam in Lesotho (phase 2 of the Lesotho Highlands Water Project)
3. The uMkhomazi water project and proposed biodiversity offset
4. The Inyanda Roodeplaat wind farm
5. Eyamakhosi Resources's application to prospect for minerals in the dunes south of the Isimangaliso Wetland Park
6. Rhino Oil and Gas's application to survey for oil and gas in the Drakensberg region of KwaZulu-Natal and the Free State

# Terrestrial Bird Conservation Programme



The survey method developed by the BirdLife South Africa White-winged Flufftail Project has yielded some of the most comprehensive datasets on many of the highly elusive rallid species found in our wetlands.

A focused conservation strategy will guide the Terrestrial Bird Conservation Programme's work over the next five-year period (2019–2024). At a global level, the work undertaken by the programme's groups falls within BirdLife International's four pillars: to save species with the objectives to prevent the extinction of threatened species and to keep common birds common, as well as to promote ecological sustainability and positive change for people. Our vision is to conserve diverse and sustainable bird populations, recognising the crucial role they play in maintaining balanced terrestrial ecosystems. Our mission is to identify and prevent or reverse negative trends in terrestrial bird species through science- and community-based conservation initiatives.

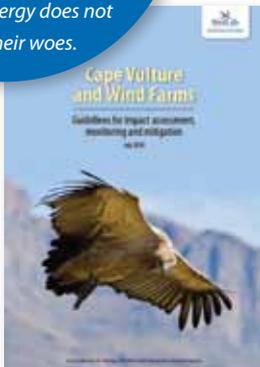
## White-winged Flufftail

We reshaped our understanding of the White-winged Flufftail and our ability to conserve this Critically Endangered species during 2018. The project achieved several milestones, including the discovery of the first-ever breeding record of this flufftail in South Africa and the confirmation of its call, which had been a mystery. The BirdLife South Africa Rallid Survey Technique, devised by Robin Colyn and Alastair Campbell, uses camera traps and remote acoustic devices within a wetland while causing minimal disturbance to the biodiversity in these sensitive ecosystems (Colyn et al. 2017, 2019). Our recently developed management guidelines for the White-winged Flufftail will direct wetland management initiatives across the species' range in South Africa. The conservation initiatives of BirdLife South Africa and Middelpunt Wetland Trust (a trust dedicated solely to the conservation of the White-winged Flufftail) complement the actions outlined within the African Eurasian Waterbird Agreement's (AEWA) International Single Species Action Plan for the species. Our most recent discoveries were presented at the 7th Meeting of Parties of AEWA held in Durban in December 2018.

## Raptors

Our Raptors and Large Terrestrial Bird Conservation Programme focuses on monitoring, research and conservation action for threatened species, including Southern Banded Snake Eagle, Secretarybird, Black Harrier, Taita Falcon and Black Stork. As an example, to address the threats that contribute to a decline in the number of Southern Banded Snake Eagles, we have been monitoring the regional population annually and have built up a strong collaboration with relevant industry partners.

Vultures are already facing a crisis in Africa. By helping guide the appropriate location and management of wind energy facilities, BirdLife South Africa's Birds & Renewable Energy Project is helping to ensure that wind energy does not add to their woes.



### SOUTHERN BANDED SNAKE EAGLE CRITICALLY ENDANGERED

Fewer than 50 mature Southern Banded Snake Eagles (SBSE) are estimated to occur in the coastal forests of north-eastern South Africa	<b>25 May</b> Transformer Box Committee set up to tackle mitigation of electrocution risk for SBSE		<b>10 Sep</b> Meeting with Dr Shane McPherson to discuss his experience on SBSE Project in 2016	<b>18 Sep</b> Forestry South Africa accepts proposal to survey plantations for SBSE and other raptors	<b>23 Oct–4 Nov</b> Surveyed Mtunzini to Dukuduku Plantations and nearby protected areas in KZN; nine territories located	<b>15 Nov</b> Dr Melissa Whitecross awarded Leslie Brown Memorial Grant by Raptor Research Foundation	<b>3 Dec</b> Ecological niche modelling for South African SBSE distribution commenced
--	---	---	--	--	--	--	--



The major threat to SBSEs is loss of the coastal forest and lowland grassland matrix to agriculture and human settlements. They are also at risk of electrocution on power infrastructure, especially transformer boxes.

**Plans for 2019:** Complete annual survey, fit at least two birds with tracking devices, complete distribution modelling and publish.

## Conservation Modelling Project

BirdLife South Africa's cutting-edge Conservation Modelling Project undertaken by Robin Colyn (KEM-JV Fellow of Conservation) is able to track environmental change across landscapes and monitor the past, present and potential future responses of species or habitats to changes in land cover and climate. By identifying core sites that form the base of resilient ecological networks, we enable conservation practitioners and land managers to develop and implement scientifically robust initiatives that promote positive change. BirdLife South Africa's landscape-level project aims to develop existing national species' conservation projects, including on Rudd's, Botha's and Red larks, Yellow-breasted Pipit, Southern Bald Ibis, Ludwig's Bustard, Lesser Flamingo, Black Stork and White-backed Vulture, among other species.



MARIETJIE FRONEMAN

## Vultures

BirdLife South Africa's Vulture Project has revealed elevated levels of lead in a large proportion of South Africa's Gyps vultures, with continued research focusing on determining the source of the lead poisoning, which is suspected to be ammunition. By setting up the Lead Task Team, a subgroup of the soon-to-be-established National Wildlife Poisoning Prevention Working Group, BirdLife South Africa will continue its active engagement with the South African hunting community in an effort to find a constructive solution to this conservation challenge. The use of lead-free ammunition for hunting or culling purposes is one of the criteria for the introduction and establishment of Vulture Safe Zones in South Africa, whereby owners of large tracts of land will be asked to manage their properties in ways that will promote vulture conservation. Tswalu Kalahari Game Reserve is poised to become South Africa's first Vulture Safe Zone, while site assessments to establish the Zululand IBA as a safe zone are already under way.

above Vultures are exposed to lead poisoning when they consume fragments of lead embedded in the carcasses of animals shot with lead ammunition.

## Ingula Partnership

The proclamation of the Ingula Nature Reserve in 2018 marked the latest milestone in the work of the Ingula Partnership, which encompasses BirdLife South Africa, Middelpunt Wetland Trust and Eskom. The 8000-hectare nature reserve is a core conservation area and acts as a catalyst to encourage conservation-based management principles for surrounding landowners. In a Biodiversity Stewardship initiative, approximately 30 000 hectares of pristine grassland surrounding the Ingula Nature Reserve have been committed by private landowners to conserve the local threatened biodiversity.



Wilge Stewardship area neighbouring Ingula.



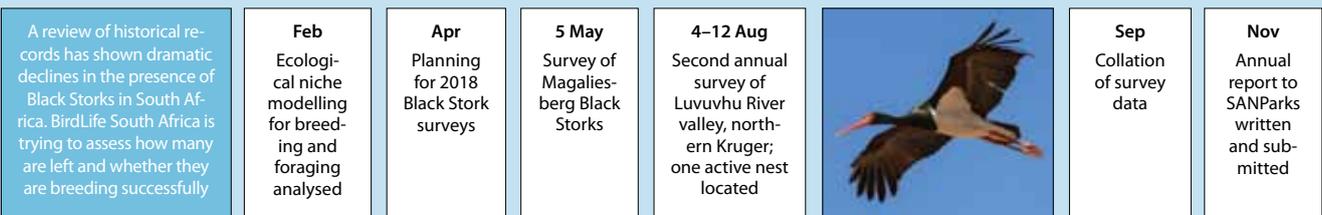
Environmental education activities at Ingula.

CARINA COETZER (2)

## Renewable energy

BirdLife South Africa promotes the deployment of renewable energy in a way that minimises harm to birds in South Africa. Through our partnership with the FitzPatrick Institute of African Ornithology, we co-authored a paper that was published in the journal *Renewable Energy* and reports on impacts of a photovoltaic energy facility on birds. We also have a good idea of the surprising diversity of birds killed by wind turbines in the country. Thanks in part to our engagement with prospective developers, a proposed wind farm near Letšeng-La-Terae, Lesotho, which threatened to accelerate the local extinction of Bearded and Cape vultures, is currently – and hopefully forever – on hold. In addition, we finalised guidelines on how to assess and minimise the negative impacts of wind energy on Cape Vultures. From guidelines to forums, workshops, meetings, newsletters and mentorship, our aim is always to ensure that decisions are based on the best available information.

## BLACK STORK VULNERABLE



2018

Degradation of wetlands, estuaries and rivers has reduced food availability for these mostly piscivorous birds. Damming of rivers is also a problem, as is persecution at fish farms. Birds also collide with powerlines.

**Plans for 2019:** Conduct final Luvuvhu River survey, analyse three surveys' data, publish ecological niche model and survey results.

# Seabird Conservation Programme

The Seabird Conservation Programme aims to prevent the extinction of seabirds through three conservation thrusts: addressing seabird bycatch in South Africa and on the high seas; halting and reversing the collapse of African Penguin populations; and developing and supporting marine spatial conservation planning initiatives.

## African Penguins

2018 was a significant year for our African Penguin conservation work. After several years of working with CapeNature and other partners, we were given the go-ahead to start work on re-establishing a penguin colony at the De Hoop Nature Reserve. The aim of the 'creating colonies' project is to start penguin breeding colonies on the south coast to counter the biggest threat facing African Penguins: a lack of food on the west coast. We have identified the De Hoop Nature Reserve site (the location of a previous breeding attempt) as a good candidate for the first colony and have another site in Plettenberg Bay that we are investigating further.

A large part of the year was taken up with drafting a management plan for the De Hoop colony. When this was approved in August, we jumped into high gear to start construction of the predator-proof fence. Nesting on the mainland is dangerous to African Penguins as they are particularly vulnerable to terrestrial predators such as caracals and leopards, while their eggs are at risk from mongooses and genetis. Protecting the breeding site from predators is therefore vital to the success of the project. After the fence was completed, monitoring equipment – CCTV cameras and the associated solar power and Internet infrastructure – were installed. This enables us to monitor the fence and colony remotely. In an exciting development, African Penguins tracked as part of our long-term pre-moult tracking project at Dassen Island spent time foraging in the De Hoop area and returned to their moulting sites having nearly doubled their weight. This confirms that the area does indeed host sufficient fish stocks for the penguins.

In December, the all-important step was taken: setting out the life-like decoys and starting up the penguin calls that are broadcast out to sea 24 hours a day. The aim of this is to convince any passing penguins that this is a safe spot to come ashore and breed. Watch this space in 2019 to see if they take the bait or if we'll have to start the process of translocations.



CHRISTINA HAGEN (2)

“The aim ... is to start penguin breeding colonies on the south coast to counter the biggest threat facing African Penguins: a lack of food on the west coast”



**right** A grouping of penguin decoys at the De Hoop colony site.

**above** The extremely life-like African Penguin decoys being used to entice penguins to breed at the De Hoop colony site were created by Cape Town artist Roelf Daling.



## Common Oceans Tuna Project

The Common Oceans Tuna Project continued working towards its main objective – to increase the uptake of seabird bycatch mitigation measures on the high seas – as well as towards the first global seabird bycatch assessment (GSBA).

2018 kicked off with the Fiji Port-based Outreach (PBO) inception workshop for the PBO officer based in Suva, Fiji. This position is essential for interaction with the mostly Asian vessels that operate south of 25°S and stop in at Fijian ports instead of returning to their countries of origin. The work of our Cape Town-based PBO officer resulted in an exciting collaboration with Global Fishing Watch ([www.globalfishingwatch.org](http://www.globalfishingwatch.org)), a website promoting sustainable fishing through data transparency, and a scientific paper presented at an Indian Ocean Tuna Commission (IOTC) Working Party on Ecosystems and Bycatch (WPEB) meeting.

The 10th and final National Awareness Workshop was held in Malaysia to increase awareness of seabird bycatch issues in the nation's fishing fleet. Several international meetings were held over the course of the year with important Asian fishing nations as well as with data scientists to prepare for the GSBA workshop taking place in 2019. Work to prepare for the assessment continued throughout the year and required constant engagement with participating countries to address concerns relating to data confidentiality, among others. The project also supported significant opportunities for the South African Albatross Task Force (ATF) team and national observers to continue assessing the uptake of seabird bycatch mitigation measures within the South African pelagic longline fleet.

below A Fijian woman makes bird-scaring lines to sell to Asian longline vessels stopping over in Fiji.



JAMES NAGAN

## Mouse Free Marion

Marion Island is a breeding hotspot for several hundred thousand seabirds, from the large, majestic albatrosses to the smaller burrowing petrels. The principal threat facing this fragile island ecosystem is the introduced house mouse which, driven by climate change and having depleted other food sources, has resorted to attacking seabirds. BirdLife South Africa is providing support to the Department of Environmental Affairs to raise funds to eradicate the mice from the island. We have launched a fundraising website, received a few important project grants, including from the National Geographic Society, and facilitated the drafting of a project plan and operations plan, which will guide both the preparatory work and the actual eradication project. [www.mousefreemarion.org.za](http://www.mousefreemarion.org.za)



ROSS WANLESS

above The South African research base at Marion Island.

below The ATF team trained fisheries compliance officers in Port Elizabeth to ensure they have a better understanding of the fishing permit conditions relating to seabirds that they need to enforce.

## Albatross Task Force

Seabird conservation in fisheries is achieved through a range of mitigation measures and vessel-management practices. Among these, the Bird-scaring Line (BSL) has become the primary and most commonly prescribed seabird bycatch mitigation measure throughout the world. There is, however, no universal mitigation measure when it comes to dealing with varying fishing methods, vessel sizes and operational practices. When working with fishermen, the ATF instructors are always seeking feedback not only to improve the effectiveness of a mitigation measure, but also to ensure that its uptake by fishermen is optimised. In South Africa the longline fleet is composed of large (>35-metre) and small (<35-metre) vessels. While the BSLs are well adapted for large vessels, this was not the case for the smaller vessels, which were experiencing entanglement with the fishing gear, difficulties with deployment and retrieval of the BSL, and the absence of high enough attachment points – all of which compromised the BSLs' effectiveness. After consultation with colleagues in other countries and working with the fishing crews, we concluded that the BSL needed to be shorter and lighter and to achieve a greater aerial extent. The search for the best materials began, then various designs – using different combinations of materials for streamers, backbones and drag sections – were assembled before being trialled at sea. We collected feedback from the fishermen, tweaked the designs and went out again. By December we were confident that we had a good new BSL design. We are now ready to begin training the BSL manufacturing team from Ocean View Association for Persons with Disabilities, so the new BSLs can be made available to the fishing industry and hopefully improve their uptake in smaller vessels.



ALBATROSS TASK FORCE

# Important Bird and Biodiversity Areas Programme



## Leading on Key Biodiversity Areas

Protected areas and conserved areas are our most effective mechanisms for safeguarding nature and, through multilateral environment agreements, countries such as South Africa have committed to expanding their estates of protected and conserved areas. But to be truly effective, these need to target the sites that are most important biologically. While there have been various international standards to identify and recognise these sites, it was only in 2016 that a global standard for all taxa and ecosystems was developed. Now known as Key Biodiversity Areas (KBA), the sites that are most important biologically are those that 'contribute significantly to the global persistence of biodiversity' in terrestrial, freshwater and marine ecosystems.

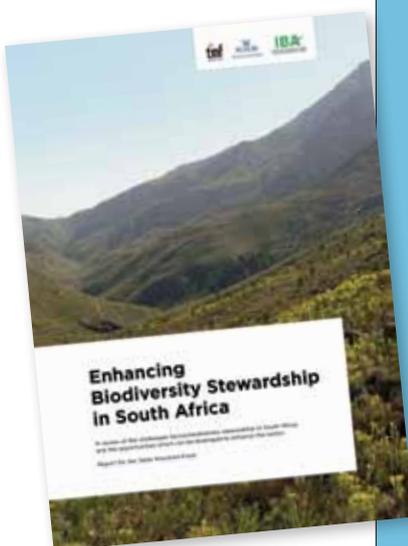
Through the work of the IBA Programme, South Africa has become a global leader in initiating a national and regional KBA programme, which included undertaking a national review and identification of KBAs in South Africa in 2018. The quality of the KBA network depends on the quality of the species and ecosystem data used, and in this regard South Africa has some of the best data in the world. It is the data on birds that are pre-eminent in terms of quantity and quality of information contributing to this process, and this is thanks largely to the dedicated citizen scientists who have been mobilised through the IBA Programme's strategic partnerships with the Southern African Bird Atlas Project 2 and BirdLasser.

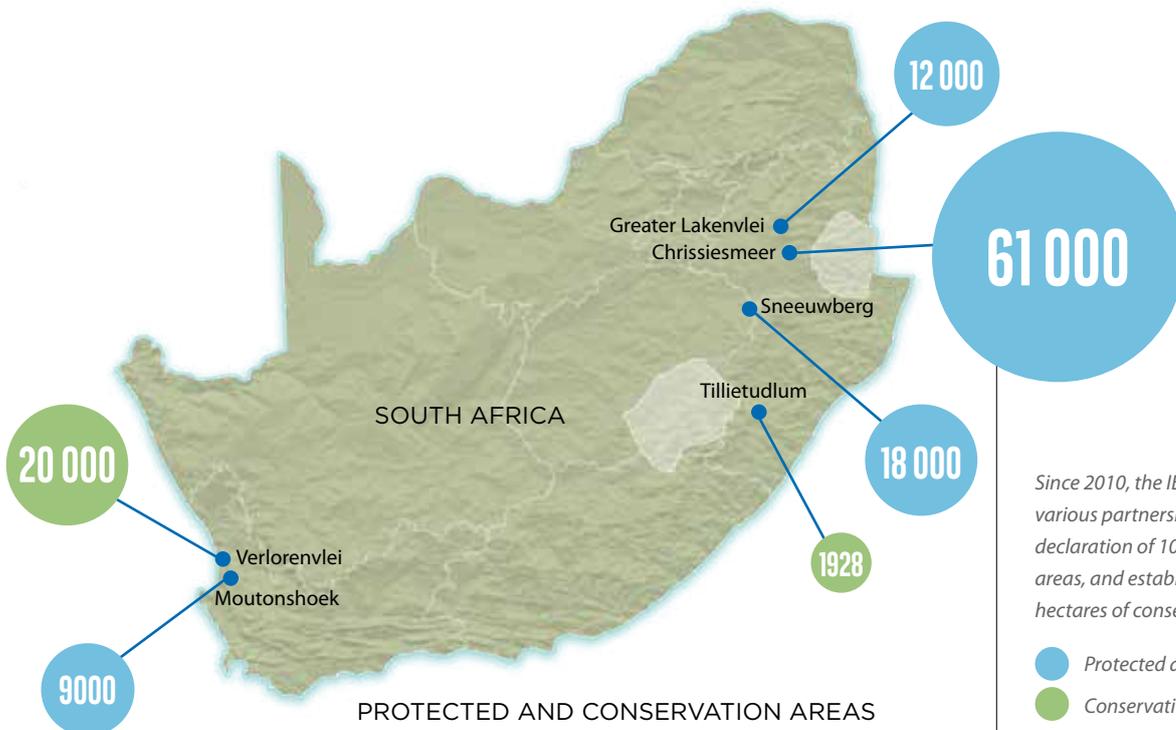
As a leader in this space, in 2018 the IBA Programme initiated the Biodiversity Assessment for Spatial Planning in Africa (BASPA) project in partnership with the IUCN Species Survival Commission and SANBI. BASPA is supporting other African countries (Mozambique, Kenya, Cameroon, Gabon and Ethiopia) in their efforts to categorise which species and ecosystems are threatened with extinction and from these data identify their KBAs. Ultimately these countries, which are currently data poor, will be able to use their KBA networks to lobby their respective governments to protect these sites.

## Enhancing Biodiversity Stewardship

The IBA Programme's new strategy, which was developed in 2018 and will run until 2023, lists the loss and deterioration of habitat as the main threats to IBAs and their associated birds and other biodiversity. Thus, in 2010, the IBA Programme began using Biodiversity Stewardship to expand protected and conserved areas onto privately owned land. Biodiversity Stewardship is a government and policy-led programme that aims to negotiate voluntary agreements with private and communal landowners to declare protected areas on their biologically important land. The IBA Programme targeted priority grassland and estuary IBAs, and in 2018 reached its milestone target of negotiating the declaration of 100 000 hectares as protected areas across these sites. Through these eight years of experience, and in partnership with SANBI and the Biodiversity Stewardship Technical Working Group, the IBA and Policy & Advocacy programmes have become thought leaders in Biodiversity Stewardship. In 2018 these programmes' staff played a central role in writing and coordinating the national Biodiversity Stewardship guidelines; researched and wrote a report on enhancing Biodiversity Stewardship in South Africa; reviewed alternative area-based conservation mechanisms in South Africa; and started reviewing and aligning international standards for recognising conservation areas with the Biodiversity Stewardship framework.

By contributing significantly to the enhancement of mechanisms to protect and conserve our IBAs, through Biodiversity Stewardship, the IBA Programme has empowered not only our own work, but also that of the broader community of practice, to more effectively get important sites protected, conserved and better managed. This in turn addresses the key threats to IBAs by better protecting, conserving and managing priority IBAs.





Since 2010, the IBA Programme has, through various partnerships, negotiated the declaration of 100 000 hectares of protected areas, and established an additional 22 000 hectares of conservation areas.

- Protected areas (hectares)
- Conservation areas (hectares)

## Protecting our estuaries

Estuaries are well known for their biodiversity, particularly their remarkable birdlife, and for the essential ecological functions they perform, such as water purification and providing nursery areas for fish. Yet they remain one of the most threatened ecosystems in the country. Many of South Africa's most important estuaries for biodiversity have little or no formal protection. Unprotected, estuaries face an increasing number of threats, including over-abstraction and pollution of their rivers, intensifying human disturbance and an overall lack of management.

Already established as a leading role player in the estuarine conservation space, BirdLife South Africa secured additional funding from the Rupert Natuurstigting in 2018 to improve the formal protection and appropriate management of these highly valuable, but vulnerable ecosystems. The Estuaries Conservation Project has focused on the Verlorenvlei, Berg and Klein River estuaries, and their catchments, and is now looking to expand to other estuarine IBAs along the Western Cape coastline.

The Verlorenvlei Protected Areas Project achieved the successful declaration of the Moutonshoek Protected Environment in 2018. This protected area of 9000 hectares conserves the Krom Antonies River and its catchment, which is the main tributary of the Verlorenvlei Estuary and is thus essential to its future survival. The Moutonshoek Valley also provides a safe haven for a variety of species, including the Endangered and endemic plant *Diascia caitliniae*, the Endangered Verlorenvlei redfin fish *Pseudobarbus verloreni*, the Vulnerable Cape leopard and threatened bird species such as the Blue Crane, African Marsh Harrier and Black Harrier. The project also facilitated the training of more than 40 local community members working on environmental management projects in the area, thereby helping to improve their socio-economic situation while simultaneously contributing to the conservation of South Africa's natural resources. The Moutonshoek Protected Environment comprises an area of integrated land use, where agricultural production and biodiversity conservation coexist. These positive conservation outcomes are made possible by the willing and supportive private landowners in the Moutonshoek Valley. They are the real conservation heroes, ensuring their land is protected and managed sustainably into the future.

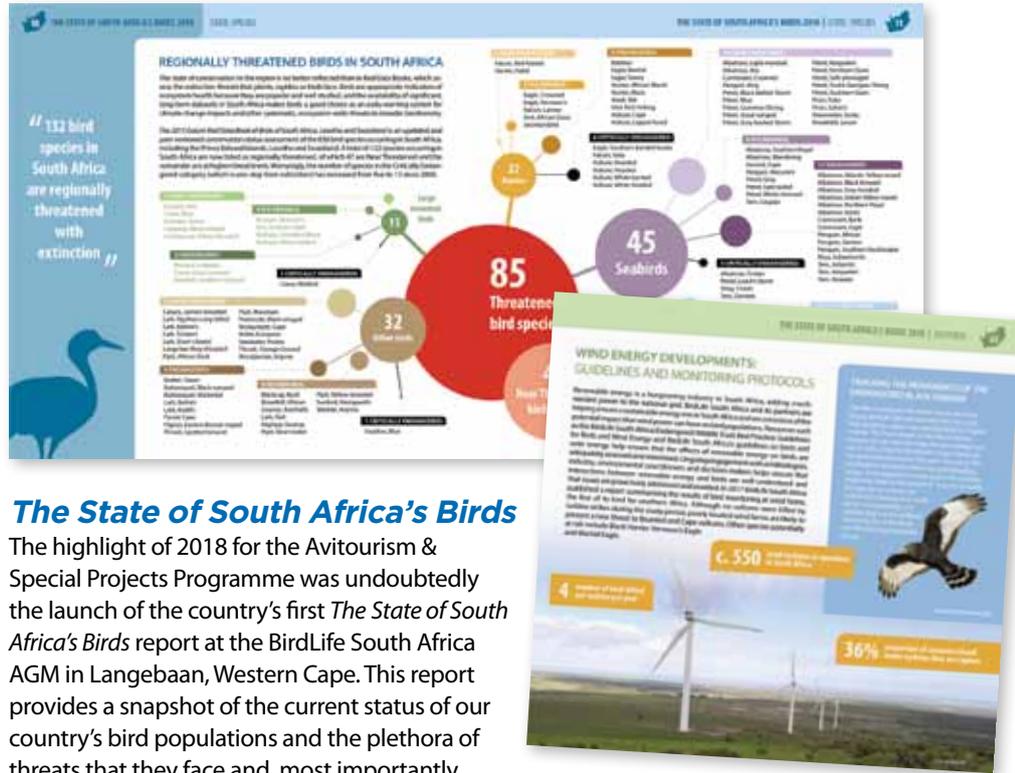
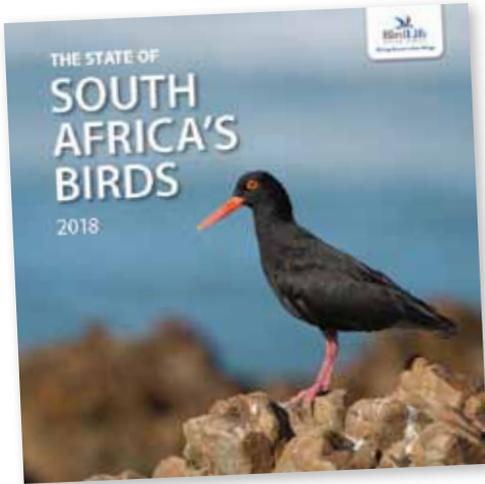
Positive negotiations with landowners at the Berg River and Klein River estuaries are likely to lead to further protected area declarations in the near future. In addition, BirdLife South Africa is partnering with CapeNature to investigate protected area expansion of state-owned estuarine waterbodies at other priority estuarine IBAs in the Western Cape. By formally protecting these estuaries and advancing conservation action, the Estuaries Conservation Project will help to safeguard their critical biodiversity and the vital ecosystem services they provide, and at the same time help to maintain their important role in supporting the local and wider coastal economies.



MICHAEL PRICE

Privately protected areas, which are voluntary agreements signed with private or communal landowners through Biodiversity Stewardship, allow for sustainable land uses that also support in situ conservation objectives.

# Avitourism & Special Projects



## The State of South Africa's Birds

The highlight of 2018 for the Avitourism & Special Projects Programme was undoubtedly the launch of the country's first *The State of South Africa's Birds* report at the BirdLife South Africa AGM in Langebaan, Western Cape. This report provides a snapshot of the current status of our country's bird populations and the plethora of threats that they face and, most importantly, it chronicles the response to these threats by a range of different conservation stakeholders. Drawing on national survey and monitoring data, the publication provides a detailed and authoritative insight into the status of birds and biodiversity within the country and will hopefully convince key decision-makers of the dire need to take action to conserve South Africa's diverse avifauna.

## Partnerships

In terms of partner development, we continued to support BirdLife Zimbabwe, providing technical assistance and advice relating to project management and proposal writing. Recognising that the conservation of birds is a regional issue, we increased our focus on improving collaboration between regional BirdLife partners by developing transboundary projects aimed at addressing regional threats to threatened species. This approach culminated in the drafting of several proposals, as well as the formation of the Kavango Zambezi Transfrontier Conservation Area Bird Conservation Working Group, operating under the auspices of the Kavango Zambezi Transfrontier Conservation Area Secretariat. BirdLife Zimbabwe, BirdWatch Zambia and BirdLife Botswana are represented on this body and it is hoped they will be able to utilise this platform to undertake key conservation interventions in that region, as well as expand their work to other key sites within southern Africa.

Key partnerships with regional conservation bodies were concluded, including a Memorandum of Understanding with the Peace Parks Foundation to undertake work across transfrontier conservation areas in southern Africa. An assessment of BirdLife Botswana was completed, resulting in this organisation being accepted by BirdLife International as a full BirdLife partner.

We increased our reach within the region, engaging with bird conservation stakeholders in Namibia on different conservation topics, as well as with the Kissama Foundation, a conservation organisation based in Angola, on work at Mt Moco in that country. The programme continued to represent the region as a member of the East Atlantic Task Force, which looks to improve the conservation status of Palearctic and intra-African migratory species and habitats along the flyway hugging the west coast of Africa and stretching from South Africa to the Arctic. A further component of partner development work completed in 2018 was the partnering with Associação

“ Recognising that the conservation of birds is a regional issue, we increased our focus on improving collaboration between regional BirdLife partners by developing transboundary projects aimed at addressing regional threats to threatened species ”

Ambiente Conservação e Educação Moçambique to undertake the drafting of legislation titled 'Regulations on the Protection, Conservation and Sustainable Use of Avifauna in Mozambique'. It is hoped that this legislation, once promulgated, will contribute to the long-term protection of birds in that country.

## Promoting South Africa

BirdLife South Africa continues to promote South Africa as one of the premier bird-watching destinations in the world. Representatives were sent to the British Bird Fair and we took advantage of several other opportunities to promote the country's birding assets during 2018. During the course of the year we engaged with a number of stakeholders in the tourism sector, forming meaningful partnerships that will facilitate the promotion of birding tourism in South Africa as well as further afield in neighbouring southern African states. We continued to provide travel advice to a multitude of international and domestic birdwatchers, marketing the services of South African Birder Friendly Establishments and Operators as well as the BirdLife South Africa-trained bird guides.



AKKERBOOM COUNTRY COTTAGES



DARLING LODGE GUEST HOUSE

## Bird guides

Five BirdLife South Africa-trained guides were placed in internship positions at high-end lodges in the Lowveld region, enabling them to earn valuable experience that will contribute to the successful completion of their FGASA Level 2 qualification. Funding was provided for several community guides to attend tourism events, including Tourism Indaba, the Wildlife Economy Indaba and The African Bird Fair, so that they could promote themselves and their businesses. Marketing materials, uniforms and binoculars were distributed and the guides' services were marketed across several media platforms. A unique opportunity for bird guides to take on the role of mentors was provided by SANBI's Rural Citizen Science Project, where they were tasked with passing on their knowledge to what will hopefully be the next generation of conservationists. A highlight was the packaging of several tours, targeted at international birding groups and led by local BirdLife South Africa-trained guides. The tours were a success and feedback received from the participants was extremely positive. More significantly, however, they provided an opportunity for senior local guides to participate meaningfully in the birdwatching tourism sector.

In addition to capacity development commitments, the programme led the drafting of a conservation strategy for the organisation, which was adopted by the BirdLife South Africa Board and will guide the work of the organisation for the next four years.

## Looking forward

In 2019 the programme will be looking to consolidate the partnerships made in 2018. We will continue our efforts to improve collaboration among BirdLife partners in the region in order to develop conservation interventions that will address regional threats to threatened bird species. During the course of the year we will initiate a review of the 2015 Eskom Red Data Book of Birds of South Africa, Lesotho and Swaziland, a process that will conclude in 2020 and significantly contribute directly to conservation planning on a regional and an international scale. Significantly, there will be a greater focus on promoting birdwatching tourism in South Africa and pushing for the diversification of this sector to ensure that all members of South African society have the opportunity to benefit from our natural heritage.



MARTIN R. TAYLOR (2)

*Nomusa Ntuli and Norman Mncube, two senior guides located at Dhlinda Forest and Wakkerstroom respectively, have guided countless birders over the years.*

# Annual Review of the Performance and Effectiveness of BirdLife South Africa

2018 reporting period

## REVIEW BY BOARD OF DIRECTORS

### Mandate

For several years, and in keeping with the provisions of BirdLife South Africa's constitution, an annual review has been conducted on the performance of the organisation as a whole and that of the Board of Directors. With respect to the former, I am indebted to the CEO and his staff for their input; for the latter, I am grateful to my fellow directors for their critical and robust assessment.

The results of both reviews have been carefully evaluated and also compared to those of previous years. In general, a steady and meaningful improvement over time is disclosed.

### Organisational review

The CEO and his staff have completed a comprehensive review of performance over plan for the 2018 reporting period. (A review of BirdLife South Africa's conservation work is reported separately.)

The key areas studied were: finance; financial performance and fundraising; HR/staff; members and bird clubs; marketing and communication; alliances and partnerships; and Board/governance. These are in turn divided into several 'activities', with the total number over all areas amounting to 34.

In considering the key areas and their specific activities, a process is followed that examines, in order: the objective; indicators of performance; current measures; target measures for the year; and achievement over plan.

It is pleasing to be able to report that, as in the previous year, the outcome of the exercise has been positive. One example will suffice at this point. Under the activity 'financial results' the following is recorded:

Objective: ongoing annual surplus

Indicators: annual financial statements

Current measures: achieved over previous eight years

Target measure: achieve surplus for 2018

Result: accomplished

The returns for virtually all other key areas/activities showed a similar result and no issues of significance were recorded.

A concern highlighted last year was the gap in the organogram, inasmuch as the important post of Conservation Manager remained unfilled. This was, and has been, entirely due to funding constraints. The concern has now been resolved and we expect to make a suitable appointment in the next few months.

A second issue raised was the ongoing question of a less than satisfactory level of diversity within our membership base. There is no quick fix to this, but we will continue our efforts to remedy the situation.

### Board self-assessment

The evaluation document used for this exercise has been reviewed and improved. In September last year, at the BirdLife International Global Partnership meeting in Belgium, the undersigned gave a presentation to a group of chairmen and CEOs of some of those partners, explaining the system that we utilise and its benefits.

Our current review again covered strategic planning; financial performance and management; brand enhancement and marketing; and the structure, operation and leadership of the Board. No material concerns of any kind were highlighted. Indeed, the returns showed an overall improvement over previous years.

In the corresponding review last year I noted three issues that required further attention. The first concerned the role of the Board in fundraising. We have made progress in this regard. Under the leadership of Yvonne Pennington, the Fundraising Committee has been active and continues to identify strategies and opportunities for the future.

A second item flagged was the criteria and process for the selection of directors. Once again, we are now in a better space. A key appointment during the year has added to the diversity and skills around the board table. I believe that at this time we have a sufficient diversity of skills at that level. Although progress has been made regarding other aspects of diversity, there is of course more to be done.

The final consideration related to 'succession planning' at board level. This has been addressed for the present, since a procedure is in place for the proper and smooth handing over of responsibility when the undersigned completes his four-year term as Chairman of BirdLife South Africa at the AGM to be held in Johannesburg on 11 May 2019.

### Opinion

The Board of Directors of BirdLife South Africa, based on the results of the two comprehensive surveys, confirms that it:

- is satisfied with the effectiveness of both the Board of Directors and the organisation as a whole;
- notes with appreciation the improvement over the previous year; and
- is confident that the minor issues identified will receive proper attention during the current year.



ROGER WANLESS  
CHAIRMAN

## REVIEW OF BIRDLIFE SOUTH AFRICA'S CONSERVATION WORK

This is the fourth annual review of BirdLife South Africa's conservation activities, as required by the organisation's constitution. The panel assessed the following strategy documents: BirdLife South Africa's 'Strategic Framework', the Conservation Division's 'Strategy 2018–2023', the 'Strategy for the KBA (IBA) Programme 2018–2023' and the Policy & Advocacy Programme's 'Strategic Focal Areas 2019'. In addition, we asked the five programme managers – Hanneline Smit-Robinson (Terrestrial Bird Conservation), Christina Hagen (Seabird Conservation), Daniel Marnewick (IBA), Martin Taylor (Avitourism & Special Projects) and Candice Stevens (Policy & Advocacy) – to critically assess whether they are meeting their goals.

It is clear that considerable effort goes into strategic planning by the five programmes. The 2019 strategy documents are even clearer, with more robust strategies and more obvious guides to performance and accountability, than those assessed in 2018. However, there is some lack of coherence among the five programmes and a report on progress made by the BirdLife South Africa team as a whole to address key threats would be a useful addition to future reports. Also, there should be regular assessment of progress at a project level so that projects that fail to live up to their potential can be dropped in order to free up resources for projects that are working well.

The programme managers do not shy away from critical assessment of threats to, and weaknesses in, their teams. These include staff burnout, loss of strategic focus due to mission creep, reliance on partnerships with government for implementation, and insufficient or insecure funding. A key strength is the generally good relations with other players in the conservation arena. Other NGOs view BirdLife South Africa's IBA/KBA programme as a flagship for conservation planning on national, regional and global scales, as its approach promises the broadest conservation returns. Other methodologies can also produce results, however: species-level approaches can substantially benefit habitat-based conservation, not least when flagship or umbrella

species, such as the White-winged Flufftail, are involved, and taxon-specific actions are required to conserve some highly threatened groups, such as vultures or seabirds.

Overall, BirdLife South Africa is making a real difference in the country, with some actions that resonate on a global scale. However, it is at risk of being a case of too little and too late. All the indicators show we are losing biodiversity faster than ever, and runaway climate change is unavoidable unless we radically change our lifestyles. Yet the environment barely registers on a national agenda focused on job creation and economic growth. The fourth pillar of BirdLife International's Strategic Objectives is 'to empower people for positive change' and this is where BirdLife South Africa needs to increasingly focus its resources.

We need to alter people's attitude to the environment from a nice-to-have luxury to an essential foundation for modern society, because we cannot afford to continue on the business-as-usual trajectory. The Arctic is predicted to be ice-free by 2050 and there is compelling evidence that the West Antarctic ice-sheet breaks up when atmospheric carbon dioxide exceeds 400 ppm. We passed this milestone in 2016, yet we continue to burn fossil fuels faster than ever. Conservation will be the last thing on people's minds in a world where 200 million people have to move because of the rise in sea level. BirdLife South Africa needs to adopt more direct and forceful ways to achieve the vision of a country and region in which nature and people live in greater harmony and more equitably and sustainably.



PETER RYAN, FITZPATRICK INSTITUTE OF AFRICAN ORNITHOLOGY, UNIVERSITY OF CAPE TOWN

The review was undertaken with assistance from Angus Burns (WWF-SA), Andrew Jenkins (Avisense Consulting) and Craig Whittington-Jones (Gauteng Nature Conservation)

## AUDIT & RISK COMMITTEE ANNUAL REVIEW, FINANCIAL YEAR END 31 DECEMBER 2018

### Mandate

The present constitution of BirdLife South Africa requires that the Audit & Risk Committee express an opinion annually regarding the effectiveness and performance of both the Board and BirdLife South Africa as a whole.

### Report of the Audit & Risk Committee to the members of BirdLife South Africa in terms of the constitution

The Audit & Risk Committee has reviewed:

- a report titled 'Annual review of the performance and effectiveness of BirdLife South Africa' (2018 reporting period) prepared by the Chairman of BirdLife South Africa;
- a report titled 'Review of BirdLife South Africa's conservation work' (2018) by Prof. Peter Ryan, Angus Burns, Dr Andrew Jenkins and Dr Craig Whittington-Jones;
- the preparation of the Annual Financial Statements of BirdLife South Africa and the External Auditors report thereon;

- during the course of the year
  - i) the financial performance of BirdLife South Africa against the budget approved by the Board;
  - ii) risk assessment and mitigation measures determined by the Board and Management;
  - iii) the Delegation of Authorities of BirdLife South Africa.

### Opinion

Based on the above and as is required in terms of the constitution, the Audit & Risk Committee is satisfied with the effectiveness and performance of both the Board and BirdLife South Africa as a whole.



ANDREW MITCHELL  
CHAIRMAN, AUDIT & RISK COMMITTEE

# Financials

## Abridged statement of profit or loss and other comprehensive income

for the year ended 31 December 2018

	2018 (R)	2017 (R)
<b>Business Division</b>	75 067	380 089
Income	10 924 448	11 628 732
Expenditure	(10 849 381)	(11 248 643)
<b>Conservation Division</b>	-	-
Income	26 028 069	21 176 370
Expenditure	(26 028 069)	(21 176 370)
<b>Net income from operations</b>	75 067	380 089
<b>Net non-operating (expenses)/income</b>	(4 311 552)	104 656
Surplus on disposal of investments	38 283	35 022
Bequests and donations to Sustainability Fund	252 190	347 634
Donations to related parties (including investments)	(6 476 723)*	(278 000)
Fair value gain on investments donated to BirdLife National Trust	1 874 698	-
<b>Net (loss)/income for the year</b>	(4 236 485)	484 745
Other comprehensive (loss)/income	(1 690 514)	497 761
Deficit on realisation of fair value gains on donated investments	(1 874 698)	-
Surplus on adjustment of investments to fair market value	184 184	497 761
<b>Total comprehensive (loss)/income for the year</b>	(5 926 999)	982 506

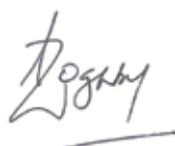
\* The total investment portfolio and an additional cash amount were donated to the BirdLife National Trust (BLNT). This donation will ultimately strengthen the organisation, as the BLNT's sole objective is to receive, manage and invest funds and other assets for the long-term benefit of BirdLife South Africa.

# Statement of financial position

as at 31 December 2018

	2018 (R)	2017 (R)
<b>ASSETS</b>		
<b>Non-current assets</b>	503 160	6 754 342
Property, vehicles, furniture and equipment	503 160	617 692
Investments	-*	6 136 650
<b>Current assets</b>	24 793 868	19 916 116
Trade and other receivables	2 721 801	990 726
Cash and cash equivalents	21 927 626	18 808 000
Inventory	144 441	117 390
<b>Total assets</b>	<b>25 297 028</b>	<b>26 670 458</b>
<b>EQUITIES AND LIABILITIES</b>		
<b>Reserves</b>		
Accumulated funds	5 241 430	11 168 429
<b>Current liabilities</b>	20 055 598	15 502 029
Income received in advance	17 833 269	13 793 069
Trade and other payables	2 222 329	1 708 960
<b>Total equities and liabilities</b>	<b>25 297 028</b>	<b>26 670 458</b>

The financial statements of BirdLife South Africa for the year ended 31 December 2018 have been audited by KPMG. Set out here are the abridged statements of profit or loss and other comprehensive income for the year ended 31 December 2018 and financial position at that date. These have been extracted from the Audited Financial Statements and disclose a sound financial position.



TONY ZOGHBY  
TREASURER

## Sponsors and Supporters

BirdLife South Africa is very grateful to the many people, organisations and companies that support its work. These include the bird clubs and volunteers who serve on the Audit & Risk, Ethics, Flock, Flufftail Festival, Fundraising, List, Marketing, Membership and Rarities committees and the Board of Directors. Many BirdLife South Africa members also serve on bird club committees and the three regional forums. We are also grateful to the volunteers who assist at BirdLife South Africa's head office and Wakkerstroom Tourism and Education Centre.

### Donors and funders

#### **R1 000 000 or more**

Airports Company South Africa SOC Ltd, Charl van der Merwe Trust, Eskom Holdings SOC Limited, First Rand Trust (RMB), Global Environment Fund (GEF), Investec Corporate & Institutional Banking, Mary Oppenheimer & Daughters Foundation, National Geographic Society, Neville Isdell, Royal Society for the Protection of Birds, South African National Biodiversity Institute.

#### **R500 000–R999 999**

Global Wildlife Conservation, JCDecaux, Kimberley Ekapa Mining JV, National Lotteries Commission, Oppenheimer Generations (S. & N. Oppenheimer), Rupert Natuurstigting, Utopia, WWF Nedbank Green Trust.

#### **R250 000–R499 999**

BirdLife International, Carl Zeiss (Pty) Ltd, Ferring International Centre SA, Hans Hoheisen Charitable Trust, Pamela Isdell, Italtile Foundation, PGA Tour Inc, Reinet Foundation, Swarovski Optik/Whylo Distributors (Pty) Ltd, Woolworths.

#### **R100 000–R249 999**

Blue Diamond Mines, Mr Price Group Limited, MySchool/MyVillage/MyPlanet Programme, N3 Toll Concession, Rand Water Services (Pty) Ltd, SANParks Honorary Rangers: West Rand Region, Sappi Limited, Sasol Group Services, L.L. Severinghaus, The Lewis Foundation, Trenchor Services (Pty) Ltd, WWF-SA Table Mountain Fund.

#### **R1 000–R99 999 and significant in-kind contributions**

Ackerman Family Foundation, M. Ackerman, African Mining and Trust Company Limited, N.J. Aggett, D. Allan, G. Allport, T. Anderson, Angloplat Ltd, P. Appleyard, G. Atkinson, AVIS Budget Rent A Car South Africa, G. Ball, Beleave Clothing, Belgotex Floors, C. Bentel, E. Bhorat, Birding Big Day participants and donors, Birding Ecotours, BirdLasser, BirdLife Free State, BirdLife Inkwazi, BirdLife KZN Midlands, BirdLife Lowveld, BirdLife Northern Gauteng, BirdLife Plettenberg Bay, BirdLife Sandton, BirdLife Sisonke, L. Birks, H. Borkum, B. Botha, R. Botha, S. Boyd, M. Brown, E.J. Buchmann, Bustards Birding Tours, D.V. Cacho, Cape Bird Club, CapeNature, S.I. Carlsson-Smith, D. Chamberlain, Charles Greig Jewellers, K. Chetty, City of Cape Town, A. Coetzee, J. Crickmay, G. Crookes, Cuckoo Bird Club, F. da Silva, S.B. Davis, J. de Boer, Department of Environmental Affairs, E. de Villiers, K. Dixon, Diemersfontein Wine & Country Estate, M. Drummond, E. Duncan, Duram Smart Paint, G. Ebedes, E. Eksteen, Elaine's Birding and Wildlife Products, A. Ellmer, Escarpment Bird Club, Eureka DIY Solutions, Everard Read Gallery, Ezemvelo KZN Wildlife, Fast & Featherless participants and donors, A. Featherstone, F.H. Chamberlain Trading (Pty) Ltd, FitzPatrick Institute of African Ornithology, R. Flack, S. Fogarty, Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO), L.J. Forbes, Ford Wildlife Foundation, A. Froneman, M. Gagiano, GardenShop, Gardens of the Golden City, B. Gardner, A. Gilbert, Greenfields Vet, C. Greig, Grindrod Bank, I. Grundlingh, B. Hackland, Haggie Charitable Trust, E. Hall, P. Hancock, T. Hardaker, Hartenberg Wine Estate, V. Head, Healthcare Navigator, L. Henderson, Heritage Prints, M.A. Heyns, K.W. Hoffmann, S.R. Horejsi, International Seafood Sustainability



GOLDEN PIPIT FRANCOIS DU PLESSIS

### Golden Bird Patrons

#### **Golden Pipit**

Tanya Browne, David Chamberlain, Philip Chamberlain, Michael and Rose Hainebach, Nedbank, Nicky Oppenheimer, Remgro, Gaynor Rupert.

#### **Golden-breasted Bunting**

Chris and Barbara Cory, Phil and Joanna Perry.

#### **African Golden Weaver**

Mandy Ackerman, Geoff and Mary Ball, Alex Barrell, Stuart and Sandra Bird, Paul and Jeanne Harris, Ken Collins Charitable Trust, Tasso Leventis, Simon Milne, Vaughan Prost, Stephen Reinecke, Simon Stekhoven, Simon Susman.

#### **African Golden Oriole**

Ismail Bhorat, Nadya Bhorat, Shaun Bouchier, John and Alison Bradshaw, Howard Buttery, Tony and Maureen Dixon, Golden Fleece Merinos, Pat and Karin Goss, Christopher Greig, Grindrod Bank, Don Hairs, Pamela Isdell, Sandra Ovenstone, Steve Palframan, Giovanni Ravazzotti, Graham Warsop, Peter Willig.

Foundation (ISSF), IUCN Species Survival Commission, J.M. Jacobs, A. Jenkins, Johannesburg City Parks and Zoo, John Dory's, John Voelcker Bird Book Fund, Jonsson Workwear, Joseph Baynes Estate, C. Kendall, A.J. Kerslake, J. Kinghorn, Kingsmead College, M. Kolb, KPMG Inc., R. Laubscher, J. Lavers, D. Lawrence, A. Lee, H. Lehle, Leonardo di Caprio Foundation, P. Liggett, O. Lockwood, C. Lotz, V. Lovell, D. MacFadyen, D. MacGillivray, S. Malone, E. Marais, R. McGrath, A. McKechnie, A. McLean, Melomed Private Hospitals, P. Mey, C. Meyer, M. Milne, Mongena Game Lodge, Mouse Free Marion donors, K. & A.J. Mueller, National Zoological Gardens of South Africa, C. Natrass, Northern Bird Club Regional Forum, Ocean Breeze Food Merchants, G. Ortner, Partnership for International Birding, Peace Parks Foundation, F. Peacock, Y. Pennington, N. Perrins, Pimstein Family, Polish Society for the Protection of Birds (OTOP), M.G.F. Pretorius, Promac Paints, S. Pyott, J. Ragsdale, Rand Barbet Bird Club, Rand Merchant Bank, Random House Struik, J. Rankin, C. & M. Read, C. Rens, A. Riley, Rockjumper Worldwide Birding Adventures, R. Rutishauser, P. Ryan, S. Schneier, E. Seevnarayan, T.E. Sewell, D. Sharp, G. Shaw, E. Shepard, Sishen Iron Ore Company, P. Soma Owen, South African Wind Energy Association, M.W. Spicer, P. Stapelberg, I. Stepski, R. & D. Stewart, L. Steynberg, M. Strobbe, W. Swanepoel, S.W. Swarts, W. Tarboton, S. Taylor, N. Terreblanche, The Diamond Route, The Hermann Ohlthaver Trust, Thelema Wine Estate, R. Thomson, TLT Accountants, M. Tripp, Tshikululu Social Investments, UNEP/AEWA, University of Maryland, K. Valentine, Van de Venter and Mojapelo (VVM), N. van der Merwe, J.J.M. van Zyl, P. Venter, E. Vercuiel, R. Vincent, W.P. Walker, J. Wallace, Walter Sisulu National Botanical Gardens, G. Webb, I. Weiersbeye Porter, West Coast Bird Club, M. Whitney, P. Whittington, Whylo Distributors, Witwatersrand Bird Club, J. Wood, T.G. Wood, World Signs, WWF South Africa, J. Yeld, Youth Africa Birding, H. Zaaiman, R. Zipp.

*Although we have done our best to ensure that all donors are listed, we apologise for any omissions. BirdLife South Africa is grateful for all the support it receives, no matter how large or small, and we endeavour to acknowledge financial and in-kind contributions.*

## Conservation League Donors

L. Almon, M.D. & T. Anderson, P. Ayling, Big Five Game Company (Pty) Ltd, D.T. Blackburn, S.A. Blades, I.L.S. Bloxam & L. Hart, P.L. Board, H. Boeke, J.H. & J. Boshoff, W.S. Boshoff, S.G. Botha, M.A. Bridgeford, M. Brink, M. Buckham, S.W. Burger, P. Cairns, P. Calinikos, P.L. Campbell, K. Carpenter, C. Coetzee, A.E. Conradie, I.H. Cooke, D. Cope, C.J. & B. Cory, R. Crawshaw, F. da Silva, S.B. Davies, J.L.W. de Jager, M. de la Rey, P.G. Diedericks, F. Donaldson, H. du Toit, L. du Toit, D. Eagle, R.T. & S. Edmond, A. Ellmer, C. Erasmus, T. Erasmus, M.G. Evans, J.H. & H. Exelby, P. Ferreira, S. & S. Fogarty, A.T. & N.T. Forbes, C. Forbes, B. Forsyth, C.R. Foster, K. Fourie, H.W. & J. Garrett, B. Garven, E. Germiquet, A. Gilbert, S. Goeckeritz, J.M.D. Graham, R.J. Gray, W.G. & A. Greig, M. Griffith, J. Grobbelaar, B. Hackland, G. Hamlin, L. Hamlin, T. Hamlin, N. Hansmeyer, T. & M. Hardaker, R.R. Harebottle, E.W.B. Harris, G. Hartford, J.B. & M. Hawthorne, V.R.L. Head, Health Care Navigator CC, D. Herbst, M.A. Heyns, M.J. Heystek, P. Hibbit, M.A. Hoole, B. Horley, R. Horley, A. Hough, N.B. Hudson, A. Jackson, G.C. Jensen, V. Joubert, A.C. Joy, F. Kanichowsky, F.J. Kleyn, N.S. Knott Craig, Kudu Private Nature Reserve, P. Landey, M. Langlands, B. Lategan, C.J.H. & J. Lourens, D.M. Lawrence, P. Lehle, O. Lockwood, R.M. Loubser, R.D.B. Lovemore, A. MacDonald, D. MacGillivray, M. MacRobert, A. Madden, B. Madden, D.T. Mahony, J. Malan, G. Maree, A.G. Marshall-Smith, M. Mason, Masterclass Events (Pty) Ltd, R. & M. McGrath, T. McKenzie, G.D. Meihuizen, J.M. Meyer, A. Mitchell, J.C. Mouton, S.M. Mylrea, D. Napier, J. & L. Niemandt, W. Noel, N. Nolden, B. Ortner, G.F. Ortner, M. Owen, L.D.G. Pegram, S. Peile, Y. Pennington, P. Perry, C. Pinker, N. Podmore, R.N. Porter, J. Potgieter, J. Ragsdale, Rand Barbet Bird Club, J.M. Rankin, I. Rasmussen, G. Raubenheimer, T. Risi, I.M. Rogan, J. Rupert, K.J. Rust, N. Ryan, P. Ryan, M. Scheepers, N. Schonegevel, W. Schonegevel, G.F. Shaw, W. Sinclair, T. Smallberger, M. Solomon, P. Soma Owen, N.D.M. Stainforth, P. Stapelberg, C. Stewart, R. & D. Stewart, L. Steynberg, A. Sugrue, E. Sullivan, S.L. Sutherland, S.S. Terreblanche, R.R. Thomson, E. Thornton-Dibb, A. Torburg, Toro Yaka Bush Lodge, J.B. & M. Ubbink, C. van den Bergh, M.J.C. van der Merwe, W. van der Merwe, C. van der Meulen, J. van Wyk, R.R.M. Wanless, I. Weiersby-Porter, A.P.N. Whyte, L.L. Wilde, J. Williams, G. Wood, J. Wood, R. Zipp, A. Zoghby.

## Corporate members

### Partner

Duram Smart Paint, Investec Bank Limited, N3 Toll Concession, Sappi Limited.

### Associate

Nelesco 569 (Pty) Ltd, Super Stone Mining (Pty) Ltd, The Hollard Insurance Company.

### Introductory

Avi Products, Birding Ecotours, Bruce Lister Incorporated, Den Braven SA (Pty) Ltd, Garden Shop, Indwe Risk Services, Ocean Breeze Food Merchants CC, Ricoh South Africa, Rockjumper Birding Tours CC, SA Wingshooters Association, Singita Management Company, Swift Flite (Pty) Ltd, The Cavern Resort & Spa, The George Skinner Family Trust, Timbila Consulting (Pty) Ltd, Umfolozi Big Five Game Reserve.

## Patrons

Dr Precious Moloi-Motsepe | Mrs Gaynor Rupert | Mr Mark Shuttleworth

## Honorary President

Prof. Colleen Downs

## Board of Directors

Roger Wanless (Chairman) | Mark D. Anderson (Chief Executive Officer) | Ismail Bhorat | Dr Mark Brown | Philip Calinikos | David Chamberlain | Peter Divall | Nicholus Funda | Linda Hart | Vernon Head | Galeboe Modisapodi | Yvonne Pennington | Tony Zoghby (Treasurer)

## Audit & Risk Committee

Andrew Mitchell (Chairman) | Philip Calinikos | Chris Cory | Arthur Plint | Tony Zoghby

## STAFF

### Executive Management

Mark D. Anderson (Chief Executive Officer)

### Conservation Division

#### *IBA Programme*

Daniel Marnewick (Programme Manager) | Romy Antrobus-Wuth (Administrative Assistant) | Dr Simeon Bezeng (Regional Red List Programme Manager) | Ernst Retief (Data and Spatial Planning Manager) | Dale Wright (IBA Implementation Manager) | Dr Giselle Murison (Estuaries Conservation Manager)

#### *Terrestrial Bird Conservation Programme*

Dr Hanneline Smit-Robinson (Programme Manager/Oppenheimer Fellow of Conservation) | Samantha Ralston-Paton (Birds & Renewable Energy Project Manager) | Robin Colyn (KEM-JV Fellow of Bird Conservation) | Sakhile Mthlane (Ingula Project Assistant) | Nndwa Muhali (Birds & Renewable Energy Intern) | Linda van den Heever (Vulture Project Manager) | Carina Coetzer (Ingula Project Manager) | Dr Melissa Whitecross (Threatened Species Project Manager, Raptors and Large Terrestrial Birds)

#### *Seabird Conservation Programme*

Dr Ross Wanless (Programme Manager) | Andrea Angel (Albatross Task Force Leader) | Andrew de Blocq (Coastal Seabird Conservation Project Officer) | Christina Hagen (Pamela Isdell Fellow of Penguin Conservation) | Reason Nyengera (Albatross Task Force Instructor) | Makhudu Masotla (Intern) | Dr Taryn Morris (–July 2018) (Coastal Seabird Conservation Project Manager) | Nini van der Merwe (International Liaison and Communications Officer) | Reginah Chari (Cleaner)

#### *Avitourism & Special Projects Programme*

Martin Taylor (Programme Manager) | Ian Owtram (–May 2018) (Bird Guide Training Project Manager) | Learnership Candidates (Bird Guides): Eddy Khosa, Prisca Mashamaite, Lungile Mteyane, Admire Ndamane, Khotso Snymes

#### *Policy & Advocacy Programme*

Candice Stevens (Programme Manager) | Jonathan Booth (Advocacy Officer)

### Business Division

Fanie du Plessis (Finance and Operations Manager) | Kathleen April (Receptionist) | Joshua Chimaliro (Gardener) | Isabel Human (HR Manager and PA to the CEO) | Rosemary Knight (Bookkeeper) | Jessie Govender (Assistant Bookkeeper) | Sindi Nqayi (Cleaner)

#### *Membership Programme*

Shireen Gould (Programme Manager) | Wendy Dittrich (June–Dec 2018) (Membership Administrator) | Bianca Hare (–May 2018) (Membership Administrator) | Janine Goosen (Subscriptions Manager & Office Administrator)

#### *Events Programme*

Emma Askes (Programme Manager)

#### *Wakkerstroom Tourism & Education Centre*

Kristi Garland (Centre Manager) | Lucky Ngwenya (Bird Guide)



ORANGE-BREADED SUNBIRD ALBERT FRONEMAN



# sappi



sappi | GalerieArt  
Silk

This annual report is printed on Sappi GalerieArt™ silk 170g/m<sup>2</sup>. Manufactured at Sappi's European mills, this coated paper is made from pulp bleached without the use of chlorine. The wood for this pulp is derived from sustainably managed forests and plantations. These mills are certified with ISO 9001 quality and ISO 14001 and EMAS environmental certification. Sappi GalerieArt™ is acid free and fully recyclable.

Printing: Burlington-Dataprint  
Design: Bryony van Wyk  
Copy editor: Leni Martin



Birdlife South Africa  
Isdell House, 17 Hume Road, Dunkeld  
West, Johannesburg 2196 Gauteng,  
South Africa

Private Bag X16, Pinetown, 2123  
Gauteng, South Africa

Telephone: +27 (0) 11 789 1122

Fax: +27 (0) 11 789 5188

Email: [info@birdlife.org.za](mailto:info@birdlife.org.za)

Website: [www.birdlife.org.za](http://www.birdlife.org.za)

**Nonprofit Registration Number:**

001-298 NPO

**Public Benefit Organisation**

**Exemption Number:**

930 004 518

*Member of IUCN (International Union for  
Conservation of Nature)*

*Member of Proudly South African*

*Member of the Water Institute of Southern Africa*

