



The Annual Gathering of Members of BirdLife South Africa
to the Wilderness 2023

FEATURING
LAB
LEARN ABOUT BIRDS



6th Biennial Learn About Birds (LAB) Conference Programme 24 – 26 May 2023



Half-collared Kingfisher (Photo credit: Richard Flack)

6th Learn About Birds (LAB) Conference



ANTHONI J RUPERT
WYNE



SCIENCE LAB PROGRAMME

Wednesday, 24 May 2023

Time	Venue	Detail	Speaker
7:00 – 18:00	Hotel lobby	Registration	
14:00 – 16:00	Protea	WORKSHOP: Forest Birding	Mike Bridgeford & Cassie Carstens
17:00 – 18:30	Protea	Cape Bird Club 75th Anniversary Lecture	Mike Buckham
19:00 – 21:00	Girls on the Square	ICE-BREAKER QUIZ NIGHT	

Thursday, 25 May 2023

Time	Venue	Detail	Speaker
07:00 – 18:00	Palm lobby	Registration/ Networking/ Refreshments	
08:00 – 08:10	Palm	Welcome and conference rules	Dr Melissa Whitecross
08:10 – 08:25	Palm	Welcome address	Mark D. Anderson
08:25 – 09:25	Palm	Science LAB Plenary Lecture: The Science behind a Mouse-Free Marion	Dr Anton Wolvaardt
SESSION: Responses to Changing Environments Session Chair: Linda van den Heever			
09:30 – 09:45	Palm	There is a Luxury Effect on ecosystem service provision by birds in a developing world city.	Dr Chevonne Reynolds
09:45 - 10:00	Palm	The State of South Africa's Birds: An assessment of the viability of SABAP2 for the creation of indices across South Africa	Christopher Shortland
10:00 – 10:15	Palm	Who benefits from the rich? Differential responses of avian functional guilds to socioeconomic of urban areas in a developing country.	Miqkayla Stofberg
10:15 – 10:30	Palm	The short-term response of coastal thicket bird communities to fire in the south eastern Cape, South Africa.	Tiaan Strydom
10:30 – 11:00	Morning Tea		
SESSION: Seabird Research, Rehabilitation and Conservation Session Chair: Dr Alistair McInnes			
11:00 – 11:15	Palm	Numbers, Movement and Conservation of Damara Terns (<i>Sternula balaenarum</i>) in South Africa	Paul Martin
11:15 – 11:30	Palm	High adult mortality at two mainland African penguin (<i>Spheniscus demersus</i>) colonies and how the rehabilitation and release of penguins may be helping to bolster these colonies	Albert Snyman
11:30 – 11:45	Palm	Artificial incubation and hand rearing of African Penguin chicks to bolster wild population	Melissa Cadman
11:45 – 12:00	Palm	Age and sex-specific foraging movements and energetics in an endangered monomorphic seabird	Zanri Strydom

6th Learn About Birds (LAB) Conference



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WYNE



12:00 – 12:15	Palm	The influence of diet on Brown Skua breeding success at Marion Island	Tegan Walker
12:15- 12:30	Palm	Questions Session	
12:30 – 13:30	Lunch (Loerie Restaurant)		
SESSION: Populations, Life History Strategies and Citizen Science Session Chair: Dr Mark Brown			
13:30 - 13:45	Palm	An improved conservation status of Southern Bald Ibis (<i>Geronticus calvus</i>) as informed by a diversity of citizen science projects suggests positive impacts of conservation attention	Carina Pienaar
13:45 – 14:00	Palm	In pursuit of an enigmatic species – what it takes to conserve the Blue Swallow	Steve McKean
14:00 – 14:15	Palm	Habitat type influence on the structure of vocalisation Case for Sabota Lark, <i>Calendula sabota</i> (Alaudidae)	Mogaletloa Madiseng
SESSION: Thermal Physiology and Behaviour of Birds Session Chair: Dr Kyle Lloyd			
14:15 – 14:30	Palm	Hot and cold: new extremes of avian thermal physiology	Prof Andrew McKechnie
14:30 – 14:45	Palm	The promise of biophysical models for understanding desert birds' thermal vulnerabilities	Dr Shannon Conradie
14:45 – 15:00	Palm	Do birds compensate for missed foraging opportunities at high temperature, by increasing foraging when it's cool?	Benjamin Murphy
15:00 – 15:15	Palm	Evolution of avian heat tolerance: the role of atmospheric humidity	Dr Marc Freeman
15:15 – 15:30	Palm	Elevated humidity increases the likelihood of avian lethal hyperthermia during extreme heat events	Nazley Liddle
15:30 – 15:45	Palm	Heat tolerance and evaporative cooling capacity in a large forest bird, the Trumpeter Hornbill: interacting effects of temperature and humidity	Bianca Coulson
15:45 – 16:00	Palm	Respirometry protocols for birds: stepped and steady-state profiles yield similar results at high air temperatures	James Short
16:00 – 16:30	Afternoon Tea		
LAB SPEED TALK SESSION Session Chair: Ernst Retief			
16:30 – 16:35	Palm	Re-establishing an African Penguin colony at the De Hoop Nature Reserve, South Africa	Christina Hagen
16:35 – 16:40	Palm	Do Verreaux's Eagles fly at Night? Implications for Future Wind Farm Developments.	Dr Chris Vennum
16:40 – 16:45	Palm	Assessing the persistence of Blacksmith and Crowned Lapwings in urban areas of Pietermaritzburg, KwaZulu-Natal	Feziwe Phoswa
16:45 – 16:50	Palm	Rescue response and stabilisation of seabirds and in particular, a Rockhopper penguin, in Plettenberg Bay	Chanel Visser

6th Learn About Birds (LAB) Conference



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16:50 – 16:55	Palm	Circadian usage patterns of avian foraging guilds associated with an abandoned granite-quarry urban refuse site of South-Western Nigeria	Rachel Akinola
16:55 – 17:00	Palm	A comparative study of the biometrics and subspecies status of the Rufous-eared Warbler (<i>Malcorus pectoralis</i>) in the Free State and adjacent areas	Dr Dawie De Swardt
17:00 – 17:05	Palm	Exploring the possibility of 3D printed alternatives to traditional copper black bulbs	Mia Momberg
17:05 – 17:10	Palm	Hot birds and an iconic African raptor	Wesley Gush
17:10 – 17:30	Palm	Questions for Speed Talks	
17:30 – 18:00	Comfort break		
18:00 – 19:00	Palm	LAB Special Session: Bird Name IQ / Qi	Prof Ian Glenn
19:00 – 20:30	Hotel Pool Area	LAB COCKTAIL FUNCTION	

Friday, 26 May 2023

Time	Venue	Detail	
09:00 – 09:10	Palm	Welcome and housekeeping	Dr Melissa Whitecross
09:10 – 09:30	Palm	Conserving birds in a complex world	Dr Hanneline Smit-Robinson
09:30 – 10:30	Palm	Science LAB Plenary Lecture: Pollinators	Dr Anina Coetzee
10:30 – 10:40	CONFERENCE PHOTOGRAPH in front of hotel entrance		
10:40 – 11:00	Morning Tea		
SESSION: Birds of Prey and Threats They Face Session Chair: Dr Hanneline Smit-Robinson			
11:00 – 11:15	Palm	Lead Poisoning in South Africa's Gyps Vultures: Source and Sub-lethal Impacts	Linda van den Heever
11:15 – 11:30	Palm	Worldwide trends of DDT levels in raptors using historic measures	Kailen Padayachee
11:30 – 11:45	Palm	Public perceptions of African crowned eagles in the urban-rural mosaic landscape of Durban, eThekweni Municipality, KwaZulu-Natal, South Africa	Mfundo Maseko
11:45 – 12:00	Palm	Does the Karoo Population of Martial Eagles (<i>Polemaetus bellicosus</i>) have the potential to buffer the species's national decline?	Jane Doherty
12:00- 12:15	Palm	Using GPS tracking of Martial Eagles to Inform Future Wind Farm Development	Chris Vennum
12:15 – 12:30	Palm	Lessons from a decade of tackling wind power	Samantha Ralston-Paton
SESSION: Conservation of Birds and Their Habitats Session Chair: Dr Giselle Murison			
12:30 - 12:45	Palm	Protected Areas - a key strategy to achieve the 30x30 target	Kevin McCann
12:45 – 13:00	Palm	The Southern African Bird Atlas Project 2: Progress, trends and use of data	Ernst Retief

6th Learn About Birds (LAB) Conference



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13:00 – 14:00	Lunch (Loerie Restaurant)		
14:00 – 15:00	Palm	PANEL DISCUSSION: Opportunities in African Ornithology – research, citizen science and cross-boundary collaborations	Chair: Chevonne Reynolds Panel: Susie Cunningham, Alan Lee, Martina Scacco, Kamran Safi, Res Altwegg, and Shamiso Banda
SESSION: Forest Conservation and Research Session Chair: Dr Melissa Whitecross			
Time	Venue	Topic	Speaker
15:00 – 15:20	Palm	Keynote: What can be done about range declines in South Africa’s forest-dependent birds?	Prof Michael Cherry
15:20 – 15:35	Palm	A quarter of a century of annual Cape Parrot (<i>Poicephalus robustus</i> censuses): Present population trends and conservation contributions	Prof Colleen Downs
15:35 - 15:50	Palm	Cape Parrot (<i>Poicephalus robustus</i>) diet in a nutshell: use of indigenous and exotic plants in the Eastern Cape province, South Africa	Dr Francis Brooke
15:50 – 16:05	Palm	Evaluating habitat connectivity based on the requirements of a most sedentary forest- specialised bird species (<i>Aplopelia larvata</i>) in focal Southern Mistbelt Forests within human- altered landscapes in KwaZulu-Natal and Eastern Cape, South Africa	Samukelisiwe Ncgobo
16:05 – 16:20	Palm	Using acoustic recording units to investigate the effects of logging of indigenous trees in the Amathole forests, South Africa on Cape Parrot breeding, and the presence of three primary cavity excavating bird species.	Cassie Carstens
16:20 – 16:35	Palm	The impact of timber harvesting on nest site availability for the Cape Parrot (<i>Poicephalus robustus</i>) in native southern mistbelt forests of the Eastern Cape, South Africa	Dr Jessica Leaver
16:35 – 16:45	Palm	Birding shows the way to Equity and Restoration	Sibongile Mtungwa
16:45 – 17:00	<i>Session Close</i>		
17:00 – 17:30	Afternoon Tea		
17:30 – 18:30	Sundowners and Networking		Upper Lounge
19:00 – 21:00	LAB GALA DINNER		Hotel Restaurant
<i>End of LAB 2023</i>			

Please note the timings above may change due to unforeseen circumstances but these will be communicated to you on the day.

THANK YOU FOR YOUR PARTICIPATION IN THE 6TH LEARN ABOUT BIRDS CONFERENCE



If you have any questions or needs during the event, please contact the BirdLife South Africa information desk situated at the entrance hall of the hotel or outside of the Palm Conference room. Enjoy the event!

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LAYMAN'S LAB PROGRAMME

Day 1: Wednesday, 24 May 2023

Time	Venue	Detail	Speaker
7:00 – 18:00	Hotel lobby	Registration	
14:00 – 16:00	Protea	PAID WORKSHOP: Forest Birding	Mike Bridgeford & Cassie Carstens
17:00 – 18:30	Protea	Cape Bird Club 75th Anniversary Lecture	Mike Buckham

Day 2: Thursday, 25 May 2023

Time	Venue	Detail	Speaker
07:00 – 18:00	Palm Lobby	Registration/ Networking/ Refreshments	
08:00 – 08:10	Palm	Welcome and conference rules	Dr Melissa Whitecross
08:10 – 08:25	Palm	Welcome address	Mark D. Anderson
08:25 – 09:25	Palm	Science LAB Plenary Lecture: The Science behind a Mouse-Free Marion	Dr Anton Wolfaardt
SESSION 1 Chair: Andrew de Blocq			
09:30 – 10:10	Protea	Garden Route National Park and the profile of the birds and birding of the Knysna Section of the Park	Christopher Patton
10:10 - 10:30	Protea	Youth birding in the Lakes District of the GardenRoute	Justin Ponder
10:30 – 11:00		Morning Tea	
SESSION 2 Chair: Dr Melissa Whitecross			
11:00 – 11:45	Protea	10 Years of the Overberg Renosterveld Conservation Trust	Dr Odette Curtis-Scott
11:45 – 12:30	Protea	Cape Vulture Conservation in the Overberg	Kevin Shaw
12:30 – 13:30		Lunch (Loerie Restaurant)	
13:30 – 14:15	Protea	CWAC-ing and Conserving our Western Cape Estuaries	Dr Giselle Murison
SESSION 3 Chair: Cassie Carstens			
14:30 – 15:00	Protea	African Crowned Eagles of the Garden Route	Melanie de Morney
15:00 - 15:45	Protea	The impacts of the Knysna fires on the local landscape and birds	Willem Matthee
15:45 – 16:15		Afternoon Tea	
SESSION 4 Chair: Alistair McInnes			
16:15 – 16:45	Protea	Saving the African Penguin from Extinction	Dr Cloverley Lawrence
18:00 – 19:00	Palm	LAB Special Session: Bird Name IQ/QI	Prof Ian Glenn

6th Learn About Birds (LAB) Conference



Day 3: Friday, 26 May 2023

SESSION 1			
Time	Venue	Details	Speaker
09:00 - 09:10	Palm	Welcome and housekeeping	Dr Melissa Whitecross
09:10 - 09:30	Palm	Conserving birds in a complex world	Dr Hanneline Smit-Robinson
09:30 - 10:30	Palm	Science LAB Plenary Lecture: Pollinators	Dr Anina Coetzee
10:30 - 11:00	Morning Tea		
SESSION 2			
Chair: Dr Melissa Whitecross			
11:00 - 11:45	Protea	Why ring birds? Trust	Dr Mark Brown
11:45 - 12:30	Protea	Conserving Beach Breeding Birds in a Dynamic Urban Context	Brittany Arendse
12:30 - 13:00	Protea	Long-term changes in the abundance of waterbirds in the Wilderness Lakes Complex	Dr Ian Russell
13:00 - 14:00	Lunch (Loerie Restaurant)		
14:00 - 15:00	Palm	Science LAB Panel Discussion: Advancing African Ornithology	Chair: Chevonne Reynolds Panel: Susie Cunningham, Alan Lee, Martina Scacco, Kamran Safi, Res Altwegg, Shamiso Banda

Saturday, 27 May 2023

Time	Venue	Details
7:00 - 18:00	Palm Lobby	Registration
11:00 - 13:30	Palm	BirdLife South Africa Annual General Meeting
13:30 - 17:00	Loerie Restaurant	AGM Luncheon

Sunday, 28 May 2023

Time	Venue	Detail	Speaker
7:00 - 10:00	Protea Lobby	Registration	
09:00 - 12:00	Protea	PAID WORKSHOP: Canon Photography Workshop	Richard Flack
13:00	End of Flock to the Wilderness 2023		

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Enjoy the event!