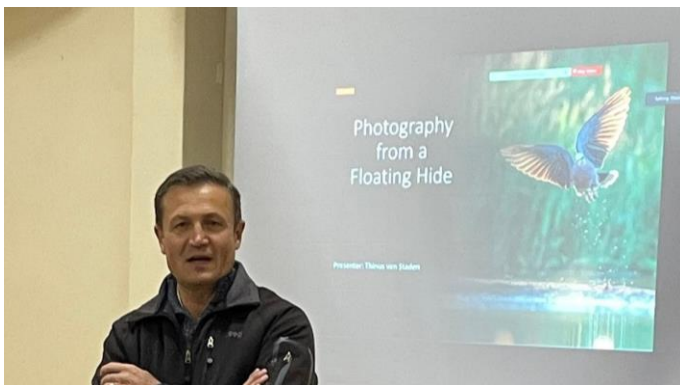


# BLING WINGS

Violet-eared Waxbill [Roelof Jonkers]

## Reflections: Club Meeting – 11 June



What do breathtaking photographs of water birds, featured in magazines, Covid lockdown and endangering your life in the process have in common? That was when Thinus van Staden had the time to conceptualise and build a floating bird hide. Testing out his contraption during winter months did lead to world-class photographs of coots, crakes, and cranes, but also almost cost his life due to hypothermia and close encounters with crocodiles. Thinus enthralled us all with his images and hair-raising tales of the process to perfect his prototype and images.

## *Inside This Issue*

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## HOOGLAND HYDRO – 2 JUNE

A howling wind bringing winter with it, an 8 km hike, steep cliffs, and dark caves did not deter the stalwarts to join Philip Calinikos on this outing to see some high-altitude species. The photographs prove that Philip managed to find all the targeted specials, despite every birder's worst enemy: wind!



Philip in his element. [Annetjie Barkhuizen]



Looking for the resident Western Barn Owl [Jenna van Schoor]



[Annetjie Barkhuizen]



Mocking Cliff Chat (M) [Mauritz Kotze]



Familiar Chat [Marissa Wolhuter]



Lazy Cisticola [Mauritz Kotze]





One of the targeted specials, Short-toed Rock Thrush, understood the assignment and posed for excellent views. [Mauritz Kotze]



Cape Bunting [Marissa Wolhuter]



Mocking Cliff Chat (F) [Marissa Wolhuter]



[Annetjie Barkhuizen]



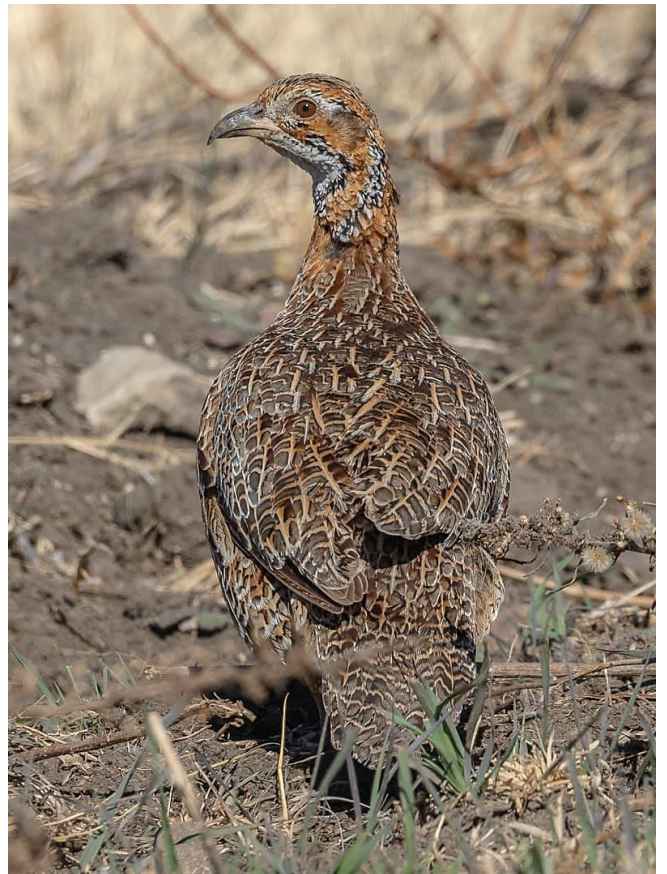
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## DEVON GRASSLANDS – 15 JUNE

Devon grasslands always deliver great species during winter months, and when guided by Prof. Andy Featherstone, this is an outing not to be missed. An amazing 71 species were seen. Highlights were Blue Korhaan and Secretarybird.



Rock Kestrel [Hannes van den Berg]



Orange River Francolin [Hannes van den Berg]



Spotted Eagle-Owl [Hannes van den Berg]



Black Sparrowhawk [Hannes van den Berg]



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**ALOE FARM – 19 JUNE**

Sixteen members attended this annual outing, led by Hannes van den Berg. It offers magnificent views of aloe species in bloom and the variety of sunbirds feasting on them.



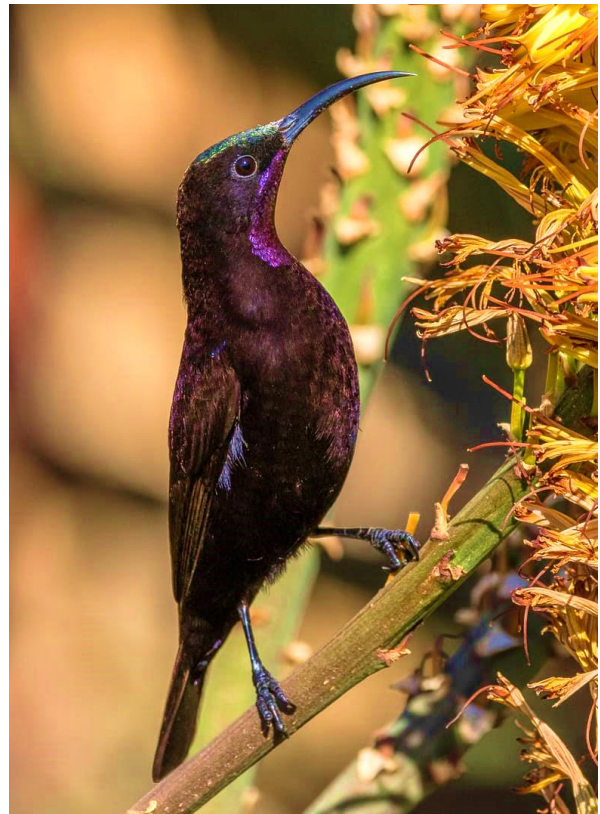
Cape Weaver [Angela Openshaw]



White-bellied Sunbird [Hannes van den Berg]



Fork-tailed Drongo [Angela Openshaw]



Amethyst Sunbird [Hannes van den Berg]



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## FAERIE GLEN NR – 23 JUNE

If there is one person with an intimate knowledge of this reserve and its birds, it is Dirk Maartens Human, who led this outing.



Streaky-headed Seedeater [Angela Openshaw]



Cape Grassbird [Mauritz Kotze]



Red-throated Wryneck [Angela Openshaw]



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## REGIONAL AND LOCAL RARITIES AND INTERESTING SIGHTINGS

June kicked off with a **Bush Blackcap** reported from a private residential garden in Bordeaux, Randburg. Unfortunately, the bird could not be located again. This report of a Bush Blackcap is the second in three years, following the single bird that hung around a few days near the admin offices of Suikerbosrand NR in May 2021.

There was some controversy over the exact identification of a few **grey-bellied Cape White-eyes**, winter visitors, seemingly, that stayed at the fountain on Magalies MBT trail for some days.



[Johann Roos]

Deale's Rock and the Zusterstroom Road delivered a number of surprises mid-month. First, a couple of **Swallow-tailed Bee-eaters** was found along the Zusterstroom Road. Other sightings at Deale's Rock itself, were a small number of **Swee Waxbills** up and down the mountain trail. A **Red-capped Robin-Chat** was heard there as well.

The stars of the month, however, also at Deale's Rock, was when Juan van den Heever and Jandr  Verster were surprised by at least three Narina Trogon in a wooded area up the mountain trail.



[Jandr  Verster]

Patrick O'Brien found **Sickle-winged Chat** near Deneysville – numerous individuals were present.

Lastly, regular reports of **Swallow-tailed Bee-eaters** at various localities seemed to flow in. Long-staying regulars are the few who seem to roost at Rietondale Proefplaas.



[Thea Jenkins]

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## *Photograph of the month*

If any misgivings about photography from a floating bird hide may still exist, images like this African Jacana and many others, by Thinus van Staden, are enough to dispel the doubts.







Fawn-coloured Lark [Ivonne Coetzee]

1, 3 & 4 July – **LBJ's Online Course: Larks, Pipits and Longclaws with Aldo Berutti.**

R250, includes online quizzes and Pdf course material to download. 22 - 25 July features an online course during evenings on **Planning your Kruger Birding Trip**, also by Aldo.

*A warm thank-you to all our club's outing leaders, and our eager photographers, for your support.*

*You make BLiNG WiNGS possible!*

#### PROGRAMME



6 July – Suikerbosrand NR



14 July – Boon's Road



17 July – Walter Sisulu BG



22 – 25 July – Course: Plan your Kruger Birding Trip with Aldo Berutti



27 July – Vulpro

## 9 July - Club Meeting



Red-breasted Swallow [JP van der Merwe]

### Swallows, Swifts and Martins:

Stephan Terblanche is our guest speaker and expert on Swallows, Swifts and Martins. His talk aims to provide birders who struggle to identify these, with a simple structure, focusing on the few visual cues unique to each species, both in flight and when perched.

Compilation and lay-out by I Coetzee

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