



Wakkerstroom Bird Club



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NEWSLETTER NUMBER 47, NOVEMBER, 2016.

Hi All,

It seems that I owe everybody an apology as there was no October newsletter, I plead pressure of work, and there can be no other reason!

Here is an interesting article from one of our observant members:

SFX @ THE VLEI.

Idly watching a Long-tailed Widowbird crossing the grassland towards the Oude Stasie, it was obvious that he was merely passing through and in no way interested in poaching territory or wives. Curious to see whether any of the resident males objected to his passage, it was difficult to absorb what happened next as his wing-shape literally began to dissolve before my eyes, becoming longer and pointed whilst the flight pattern became smoother as speed increased. Within nano-seconds it had morphed into a bird with the wings of a falcon and an extremely long tail – 'jizz' was certainly not going to help here! In actual fact, what I had seen was a Lanner Falcon striking the Widowbird and the angle from which I watched the interception simply blurred the action into an out of world experience. As the Lanner proceeded to pluck and eat its prey atop one of the large wooden poles carrying power cables near the dirt road turn-off, my viewing returned to normal albeit with some regret for the departed Widowbird.

SFX, for us plebs, is a Hollywood acronym for Special Effects in movies!

Vlei Walk Saturday 5th.

A small turnout of Club members was supplemented by a good turnout of visitors and a very pleasant morning ensued. The slightly grey start to Guy Fawkes Day revealed some 54 species, very acceptable indeed! Specials included immature African Fish Eagle and Long-crested Eagle. Other raptors were Black-shouldered Kite and African Marsh Harrier. Cape Shoveler with ducklings and Red-collared Widowbird (not too common on the vlei) rounded out the morning.

Nice to meet up-country members Ros Gerber and Helen Versfeld!

Our vlei walks normally attract a good number of members but this one was a little down. The recording of an excellent 54 species in just a couple of hours should attract a good number of the human species next month.

Diary of 2016 Events:

Wednesday 16 November – 17h30 for 18h00 – Wesley Gush will give a brief overview of his project on Rudd's Lark etc. in our area. I'm sure he would like some input from our experienced birders!

Saturday November 26 - Birding Big Day

Saturday 3 December – final Vlei Walk for the year! On the bridge as early as you like.....

Saturday 3 December- our Year End Function at Dana, Bring and Braai, more details to follow this week.

Brian.