

From BirdLife Zimbabwe's diary...

1 May: The BirdLife Zimbabwe Education Department was invited to the World Environment Day Press Conference by the Ministry of Environment and Natural Resources Management. During this event, BirdLife Zimbabwe shared the success of the Bird Awareness Programme in influencing sustainable natural resources management by the community in one unprotected IBA – the Driefontein Grasslands. The Minister of Environment and Natural Resources Management was delighted to hear this and urged members of the media to follow up on this report. **4 June:** The 2012 World Environment Day celebrations were held at the Harare Botanical Gardens. This was an opportunity for BirdLife Zimbabwe to further showcase the success of its Bird Awareness Programme (BAP) to more stakeholders. The Director in the Ministry of Environment asked BirdLife Zimbabwe to present to the gathering the success of the Bird Awareness Programme in the Driefontein Grasslands IBA. Farmers, schools and companies were interested in the bird conservation programme and asked for more literature about our projects. Four schools attended the commemorations including two BAP schools. The Ministry of Environment is pleased with the work that BirdLife Zimbabwe is doing. Along with these commemorations, the Minister of Environment Mr. F.D.C. Nhema also launched the 3rd Zimbabwe Environmental Outlook that highlights the state of the environment. **5 June:** BirdLife Zimbabwe, in partnership with Mukuvisi Woodlands Association, organised the commemorations of the World Environment Day with some more schools. This event was held at Maranatha Junior School and seven schools attended the event. BirdLife Zimbabwe presented on bird migration to the thrill of school children who were delighted to see the link between bird migration and their geography studies on climate/weather. To boost the interest of schools in the Wildlife Clubs project, BirdLife Zimbabwe made agreements with the owner of Haka Game Park to allow schools free entry into the park. Three schools immediately joined the BAP programme and promised to arrange for a trip to Haka Game Park! **7 June:** The BirdLife Zimbabwe Education Department in conjunction with Mukuvisi Woodlands officiated the launch of Bird Awareness Programme as well as the Eco-Schools Programme at Warren Park High School. This was a follow up to the presentation made by BirdLife Zimbabwe at the Schools WED commemorations. BirdLife Zimbabwe exhibited some bird specimens, the most attractive to school children being owls and the Kori Bustard. The event was well attended by students and teachers from this school. Later we visited the Maranatha Junior School. To show that this school had embraced the Bird Awareness Programme, the club patron Mr. Sibanda organised representatives of each class into the environmental quiz club. Today the team met to start preparing for the competition. The first topic they worked on was ornithology mainly because that was the area on which they had a lot of literature donated to them by BirdLife Zimbabwe! All in all, these events showed that the Bird Awareness Programme is very popular with the government, the teachers and the school children alike!