Welcome to the second issue of the BirdLife Africa Newsletter in 2023. As Africa continues to grapple with the twin crises of climate change and biodiversity loss, the need for collaboration across the board to tackle these challenges remains paramount. We are delighted to be part of the Africa Biodiversity Collaborative Group (ABCG), joining other international conservation organisations in Africa to amplify our impact across the continent.

Our Partners’ work in protecting nature is more important than ever. From mangrove restoration in Guinea to implementing bird-safe energy infrastructure in Ethiopia, our Partners continue to make great strides in conservation across the continent.

We hope you will enjoy our Partners’ stories from around the continent, and that you will share this newsletter with your friends and supporters. Happy reading and thank you for your continued support.

Kariuki Ndang’ang’a
Regional Director for Africa, BirdLife International
By Lewis Kihumba and Evelyn Namvua

In August 2023, BirdLife International Africa, and Africa Biodiversity Collaborative Group (ABCG) signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) to advance collaborative biodiversity conservation in Africa.

The MoU focuses on developing and implementing conservation programmes and linkages including climate change, restoration in line with the Africa Union Agenda 2063, Africa’s vision and development agenda and the Post 2020 Global Biodiversity Framework - the global plan to halt and reverse biodiversity loss by 2030.

BirdLife and ABCG will collaborate closely in joint advocacy campaigns and actions that enhance biodiversity conservation, restoration and climate resilience building of local communities; resource mobilisation for conservation work; policy influencing and working with governments to push for implementation of global commitments on biodiversity and climate.

Further, BirdLife will share with ABCG and partners scientific and technical support tapping into its vast and growing network of partners in 26 countries in Africa and 116 countries globally, in addition to its cutting-edge science.

ABCG will link BirdLife Africa to its other technical partners and potential funding agencies with the aim of supporting biodiversity conservation in Africa, provide BirdLife with resources, where available for capacity strengthening, and share information and facilitate engagement of BirdLife Africa scientists in policy dialogues, and learning and sharing events globally.
"The Africa Biodiversity Collaboration Group (ABCG) is honoured to sign this MoU with BirdLife Africa and through it, will strive to advance the recognition and role of bird species and their habitats, as critical contributions to healthy ecosystem function and conservation", said Rubina James, Director, ABCG.

"This collaboration evidences the value of harnessing our collective resources and commitment to protect, conserve, and preserve biodiversity to ensure the well-being of our planet and the survival of all life in the air, on land and under water", Rubina added.

"At a time when Nature is in crisis, we are excited about this collaboration with ABCG, which is timely. This collaboration will leverage BirdLife’s extensive partnership across the continent, technical capacity, and innovative conservation solutions to tackle some of the most pressing biodiversity challenges on the continent", said Dr Kariuki Ndang’ang’a Regional Director for Africa, BirdLife International.

This collaboration aims at moving the needle for conservation, biodiversity, and climate at a time when the need to address the triple planetary crises - climate change, biodiversity loss, and pollution is most urgent. It also comes at a time when Africa has held its inaugural Climate Summit to build momentum for urgent climate action ahead of the Climate Conference (COP28) in Dubai, United Arab Emirates (UAE) later this year.

"This collaboration evidences the value of harnessing our collective resources and commitment to protect, conserve, and preserve biodiversity to ensure the well-being of our planet and the survival of all life in the air, on land and under water."
WINNERS OF SOUTH AFRICA’S PREMIER BIRD PHOTOGRAPHY COMPETITION ANNOUNCED

Bird lovers and photographers flocked to the African Bird Fair in Johannesburg (and online) in July 2023 for the announcement of the winners of the inaugural BirdLife South Africa Photography Competition, in partnership with Canon South Africa. A professional panel of judges had the tough task of whittling down the over 3000 images received to a shortlist of 200, and then finally to eight exceptional winning images over different categories. In a serendipitous turn of events, the overall winning image by Halima Beale showcases a sunset scene featuring the familiar silhouette of a Blue Crane (Anthropoides paradiseus), South Africa’s national bird. This was especially fitting for BirdLife South Africa, the competition organizers, who are tasked with conserving South Africa’s birds and their habitats.

The competition, which raises funds for the important conservation work of BirdLife South Africa, has captured the imagination of South Africa’s birdwatching and photography community. In fact, over 400 photographers entered the competition, in support of the organisation’s work, but also in the hope of winning one of the amazing prizes totalling almost R500,000 (26,000 USD) across 10 categories.

The main categories were Action; Portrait; Birds in the Environment; and Garden, with secondary categories awarding the best photos of threatened and endemic species, an award for the best Youth entry (for a photographer under 18), and a publicly-decided People’s Choice prize.

There was significant interest in the shortlisted images made available for the People’s Choice category, with over 4000 members of the public participating in voting. The quality and variety of images entered were simply outstanding.

Roger Machin, Product Marketing Manager for Canon South Africa and Senior Judge for the competition said: ‘We were really impressed by the efforts people went to, to get such amazing pictures of our country’s birds. Canon South Africa was very happy to be part of this competition, most notably with the big prize in the Youth Category. We really want to see the next generation of birders and bird photographers showing their stuff.’
The overall winner, which also won the Birds in the Environment Category, was a photograph of a Cape wetland just after sunset, with a single silhouetted Blue Crane reflected in the fiery orange water. The talented photographer, Halima Beale from Somerset West, walked away with the grand prize of a three-night, all-inclusive stay for two people at the magnificent Tswalu Kalahari Reserve worth R240,000, as well as access to over R1 million worth of Canon camera gear to use on loan while at Tswalu.

Beale was ecstatic upon hearing that she was the overall winner, and shared the story behind the image: "We were heading out to Witsand for our family getaway with the kids and grandkids. The sun was already setting when we drove past this piece of water with Blue Cranes and the most magnificent sunset! But, it was already dark and we were late so we drove past. Then my husband said to me, "No, let's go back. This is too beautiful. You have to take this picture!" So we did, and I jumped out in the dark with my camera and took a series of pictures, and here we are!"

The other main category winners included a spectacular photo of a male Pennant-winged Nightjar (Caprimulgus vexillarius) displaying (Johannes van der Merwe; Action), a diminutive female Swee Waxbill (Coccopygia melanotis) perched delicately on a hanging branch (Dionne Miles; Portrait), and a female White-bellied Sunbird (Cinnyris talatala) hovering in place while drinking nectar from a Chinese hatplant (Holmskioldia sanguines) (Philip van den Berg; Garden).

The secondary categories featured a Cape Cormorant framed from above against a crashing wave (Andrew Jenkins; Threatened Species), a male Swee Waxbill (Coccopygia melanotis) feeding on a grass stem (Mike Buckham; Endemic Species), and a male Cape Sugarbird (Promerops cafer) gripping a protea flower in a howling southeaster with its resplendent tail trailing horizontally behind it (Adam Buckham; Youth). The People’s Choice winner was a shot of a rare Black Coucal (Centropus grillii) in flight carrying its praying mantis prey (Roger Hogg).
The announcement of the winners was the culmination of months of effort from BirdLife South Africa and Canon South Africa, who partnered to launch this first-of-its-kind competition. Mark D. Anderson, Chief Executive Officer of BirdLife South Africa, explained the significance and objectives of the competition.

“Our annual Photography Competition provides us with an opportunity to showcase South Africa’s 870-plus magnificent bird species, through images captured across the length and breadth of our beautiful country, whether that’s in a famous national park or in a local garden. It is also a platform for our organisation to raise much-needed awareness of and funds for our conservation efforts, and we are extremely grateful to the many photographers who entered their images, and, in so doing, contributed towards our work.”

On World Rangers Day – marked on July 31st every year, we celebrated rangers, protectors of natural and cultural heritage. Rangers work tirelessly to safeguard our protected areas, wildlife, and ecosystems, often under demanding and challenging conditions.

Seychelles’ Cousin Island Special Reserve’s rangers, known as wardens, don’t wear shoes but they are up to their ears in daily work.

A Cousin Island Special Reserve Warden is a multitasking professional, unlike peers elsewhere who may be specialists. They all undertake ecotourism, boat operation, conservation and biosecurity, island management, equipment and machinery maintenance, and surveillance and patrols.

Their most exciting, daily activity is running the Reserve’s highly successful ecotourism program Monday through Friday. In the mornings, between 9.45 and 10.30 am, boats carrying visitors to the island line up offshore, as they wait for the landing protocol peculiar to this Special Reserve.

Soon, the highly trained wardens drive the reserve boats from one charter boat to another, retrieving visitors and safely landing them on the nature reserve. In place for decades, this protocol prevents the introduction of pests that could harm wildlife on the island.

Driving the boat at high speed onto the beach as they arrive is a highlight of the trip for many tourists. It must, however, be handled cautiously and dexterously during rough seas, such as those experienced during the South East trade winds.

“Getting on Cousin Island is not easy. The waves are aggressive, and you basically have to beach your boat on the sand at full speed when you catch a wave,” said Mr. Scotty Eddy, a tourist visiting the island.

Yet these boys do it daily, many times over.

“This can be physically demanding, especially on hot days, but we’re used to it.” Christopher, one of the wardens explains. He is drenched in seawater from head to toe after driving the boat in the unforgiving trade winds. Despite this, he still smiles and walks with a spring in his step.
Once the visitors are on land, the same wardens will guide them around the island. Since they are not ordinary guides but also undertake the conservation on the Special Reserve they can deliver a riveting Cousin story in both English and French as well as answer any questions from curious visitors who may want to delve deeper. They will start with the island’s history as a coconut plantation. They will draw attention to the unremarkable Seychelles Warbler, the reason for the island’s existence as a nature reserve, before showcasing the island’s varied wildlife. They will call out for the Seychelles Magpie Robin (Copsychus sechellarum) in their territory, search for elusive Bronze-eyed geckos and lead visitors to welcoming Aldabra giant tortoises.

The wardens will ensure that groups stay together, answer questions, and provide tips and tricks to keep mosquitoes at bay. They will also take care of elderly visitors if necessary.

Once the tour is complete, they will deliver the guests back to their boats and take their lunch break.

In the afternoon, they must meet the demands of the island’s conservation programs. These programs get especially intense during the Hawksbill turtle nesting season and seabird breeding, especially of the Lesser Noddy (Anous tenuirostris), which arrive by the thousands. They will gather data and relay it to the conservation manager. During the monitoring and censuses for Wedge-tailed and Tropical Shearwaters, they might also work in the late evenings and at night to collect data for these birds as they return to the nests.

They also must do routine maintenance of boats, engines, and other equipment. In addition, they undertake surveillance patrols to ensure there are no poachers or other incursions into the Special Reserve. “Cousin doesn’t get the kind of poaching one sees on the other islands but a few people try to sneak into the marine reserve to fish and we have to be vigilant. These incidences are usually rare and resolved peacefully”, concludes Dailus Laurence, ‘the island’s Chief Warden.
By Ken Mwathe

African Heads of State met in Nairobi from 4th to 8th September for the inaugural African Climate Summit organised by the African Union and hosted by Kenya. The goal of the Summit was to build momentum and consolidate Africa’s messaging ahead of the annual global climate conference (COP28), which will take place in Dubai, United Arab Emirates (UAE) in December. This comes at a crucial moment in history when the impacts of climate change are being felt world over. From extreme heatwaves in North America, and Europe with temperatures in July 2023 being the highest on record and likely for at least 120,000 years, according to the UN World Meteorological Organization.

Africa is warming faster than the global average, a special UN agency reported in 2021. This year has witnessed extreme drought in some countries across the continent, as well as one of the most intense cyclones - Freddy which devastated Madagascar, Malawi, Mozambique and Zimbabwe and led to loss of property and fatalities. According to climate experts, these extreme weather conditions are bound to increase in future.

Africa, as many other developing regions, is on the frontline of the climate crisis, bearing the brunt of climate change though contributing least to it. Though the continent generates about 3.9% of emissions, the rapidly increasing climate shocks are bound to hit the continent and its people the hardest. Statistics indicate that Africa loses up to 15% of its potential GDP to climate-related risks. It is estimated that by 2100, this could rise to as much as 64%.

The Summit ended with the Nairobi Declaration which proposed a raft of measures to tackle the adverse effects of climate change. One of the thorny issues facing climate is climate financing. The declaration highlighted Africa’s adaptation needs and called for the operationalization of the Loss and Damage Fund - a fund that is being set up to compensate vulnerable countries from climate crisis related losses - as agreed upon during COP27.

Further, it called for the honoring of the USD 100 billion annual climate financing pledge as promised at the Copenhagen conference in 2009. In addition, African leaders urged world leaders to support a global carbon taxation regime including a carbon tax on maritime transport and aviation sectors in addition to fossil fuels.
Notably, the Nairobi Declaration recognized the role of nature and biodiversity and healthy ecosystems in addressing the climate crisis. African countries committed to strengthen actions to halt and reverse biodiversity loss, deforestation and desertification as well as restore degraded lands. They also committed to include biodiversity, climate and ocean agendas into national development plans and promote climate-positive growth that protects and enhances nature and biodiversity. Critically, leaders pledged to support smallholder farmers to transition to climate smart and restorative agriculture as essential custodians of ecosystems.

Financing for climate has been a constant debate at climate meetings. In Nairobi, leaders called for an overhaul of the current climate financing architecture. Arguing the current system has failed to address issues that are pertinent to Africa, they said the new framework must be responsive to Africa’s needs, including consideration for debt restructuring and relief. Debt restructuring and relief would go a long way in helping African countries to focus on helping communities adapt to the climate crisis.

The need to provide sufficient and predictable financing also came up. For example, Africa requires about $124 billion per year to help its people adapt to the climate crisis but today, the continent is receiving only $28 billion. The Summit called for the finalization of the Global Goal on Adaptation, an ambition that will place adaptation and prioritize it on the same level with mitigation. Secondly, the leaders called on developing nations to honor a pledge made 14 years ago to provide at least $100 billion per year to support climate action including adaptation. It is notable that a number of developing countries pledged some funds in Nairobi, but these must be scrutinized with a tooth comb to ensure they are not a repeat of previous pledges or a restatement of already ongoing projects.

As the clock ticks towards COP28 in Dubai, UAE, it is fair to say that the African voice has been heard through the Africa Climate Summit, which will now be a biennial event. For three days, the world’s attention was fixed on Africa. The commitments and call to action should inspire tangible action and fill the African people with hope, as high as Burj Khalifa, the tallest building in the world - found in downtown Dubai.
By Lewis Kihumba

It is estimated that one out of five of our entire world’s bird species migrate. These feathery species travel thousands of kilometers on routes collectively known as flyways, across continents in search of suitable feeding, breeding, and resting grounds. The Rift Valley/Red Sea flyway is the second most important flyway for migratory soaring birds in the world, with over 1.5 million birds of at least 37 species, including 5 globally threatened ones, using this corridor to move between Africa and their breeding grounds in Europe and Asia.

Migratory Soaring Birds (MSBs) including raptors, pelicans, stork, among others, use columns of rising air, known as thermals, to gain height and glide to cover long distances, hence using little energy in flight. Majority of MSBs are large-bodied birds and are highly vulnerable to the impact of aerial infrastructures, including powerlines and wind turbines.

“Migratory Soaring Birds are exposed both to electrocution and collision risks, especially, if such infrastructures are poorly deployed in their habitats or migratory routes”, said Alex Ngari, Migratory Birds and Flyways Conservation Programme Manager, BirdLife International Africa.

Energy Deficit

Africa has the lowest access to electricity per capita; demand outstrips access with more than 600 million people without connection to electricity or just over 40 percent access rate. This also has a significant impediment to the continent’s socio-economic development. Hence, there is increase in energy developments across the continent, but which poses a threat to biodiversity particularly MSBs.

Like many countries on the continent, Ethiopia has an energy access deficit, characterized by low electrification levels, dependency on traditional energy sources include fossil fuels, in addition to low standards of energy efficiency. High demand for energy in the country has led to increasing focus on renewable energy sources. In tandem with this growth is concern that these energy infrastructure developments would negatively impact biodiversity particularly migratory and resident bird species which are facing multitude of challenges along their migratory routes.
During the first phase of the Global Environment Facility (GEF)/United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) funded Migratory Soaring Bird (MSB) Project which ran from 2013 to 2018, studies were conducted to identify development sectors which posed the greatest risk to MSBs yet offered the best opportunities for mainstreaming gains.

Inevitably, the energy sector emerged as a competitive sector, and was chosen as one of the focal sectors. Stakeholder analysis and partner engagements were then carried out, in addition to awareness raising about birds and the energy sector which increased by at least 70% among the partners and stakeholders. This phase offered great opportunities for both energy and conservation authorities become more aware of the bird-energy infrastructure problem in the country.

In 2018, the second phase of the Global Environment Facility (GEF)/United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) funded Migratory Soaring Bird (MSB) Project was launched. The project focused on mainstreaming migratory soaring bird conservation considerations into the productive sectors including Energy, Agriculture, Tourism, Hunting and Waste Management along the Rift Valley/Red Sea flyway.

In Ethiopia, the project was implemented by BirdLife International in collaboration with the Ethiopian Wildlife and Natural History Society (EWNHS), the national BirdLife partner. The country is home to the largest known wintering congregation of the Egyptian Vulture (Neophron percnopterus), a globally endangered species and a long-distance migrant. Over the years, thousands of birds including raptors, storks, might have died because of electrocution or collision with power lines in the Rift Valley/Red Sea region.

**Laying the Groundwork**

In February 2020, Ethiopia signed the Memorandum of Understanding on the Conservation of Migratory Birds of Prey in Africa and Eurasia (Raptors MoU) at Conference of Parties (CoP) 13, a significant step towards strengthening the protection of migratory birds of prey within the country. Following this important milestone, in November 2020, under the support of the MSB Energy Project, a quadripartite Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) between the Ethiopian Electric Power (EEP) – responsible for generation, transmission and management of high-voltage powerlines in the country; Ethiopian Electric Utility (EEU) – responsible for distribution and management of low and medium-voltage powerlines; Ethiopian Wildlife Conservation Authority (EWCA), and EWNHS was signed.
The MoU aimed at cultivating harmony between energy infrastructure development and the conservation of MSBs and other vulnerable birds in Ethiopia.

“This collaboration initiated with the energy companies is already proving to be an inspirational first step towards development of bird safe energy in the country”, said Mengistu Wondafrash, Executive Director of EWNHS.

For the first time ever in the Ethiopia’s history, EEP, EEU, EWCA and EWNHS carried out joint field missions to identify dangerous/killer energy infrastructures in parts of the Oromia & Afar Regional States, Central and Eastern Regions of Ethiopia, respectively. Following the mission, a rapid action plan was developed to retrofit the killer powerlines for a double win, i.e., saving species and achieving stable power supply. Consequently, priority infrastructures were identified in various areas including Koka, Metahara, Logia, and Samara in the two regions.

With the consent and guidance of EEU, retrofitting materials were procured and imported to Ethiopia through the financial and technical support of both MSB/Energy and Egyptian Vulture New LIFE Projects. After having built the capacity of the EEU concerned staff, a total of 182 poles were retrofitted within a period of three weeks, by deploying a team of 15 experts drawn from EEU and EWNHS.

“I am really thrilled to see the retrofitting of identified killer infrastructures has been successfully completed”, said Dagimhiwot Fantahun, Director of the Environment, Social, Health and Safety Directorate of EEU. “This pilot action is a breakthrough in triggering the interest and commitment of the company to be heavily engaged in similar endeavors in the times to come to make our energy infrastructures bird-friendly”, she added.

Looking Ahead

BirdLife and EWNHS have worked together to expand the partnership to also include government departments that are involved in waste management at municipalities and management of natural resources for a concerted efforts to minimize the impact of energy infrastructure on birds and other animals. Additionally, Ethiopian Energy Working Group on Reconciling Energy Sector Developments with Migratory Species Conservation has been constituted with EWCA as the current convener. The overarching objective of the Working Group is to enhance awareness and facilitate the involvement of all relevant stakeholders in the process of reconciling energy sector developments with nature.
GUARDIANS OF THE SEAS: PUTTING COMMUNITIES ON THE FRONTLINE OF SAFEGUARDING MARINE RESOURCES

The 9th of August 2023 was a busy day in Fogo Islands in Cabo Verde. His Excellency the President of the Republic of Cabo Verde, Mr. José Maria Neves, and his team landed at Fogo airport and headed for the Port of Vale de Cavaleiros. He made a promise and kept it: attend the launch of the Guardians of the Seas (GOS) programme of Fogo Island, an event organized by Associação Projecto Vito, one of the implementing partners of the project "Empowering Cabo Verde communities towards responsible practices in artisanal fisheries". The project is a conservation initiative coordinated by BirdLife International with financial support from the UK Government’s Darwin Initiative.

The GOS programme in Fogo is the third of its kind to be launched or expanded since October 2022, after similar launches in the islands of Sal and São Vicente in the country, as part of BirdLife Africa’s marine conservation work. Implemented by Biosfera (BirdLife Partner) and the APB - Associação Projeto Biodiversidade. GOS is an innovative citizen science approach to promote sustainable fisheries practices through the engagement of fishing communities. The programme addresses the bycatch of vulnerable marine species such as seabirds, sea turtles and sharks by empowering members of the local artisanal fishing community to act on, monitor and report incidences on marine megafauna in fisheries activities.

The West African marine ecosystem is a biodiversity and a fishing hotspot. For many years, concerns have been raised about the impacts of fishing activities both industrial and artisanal on species.

Limited data have shown that the intensive commercial fisheries associated with bycatch could bring vulnerable migratory species such as seabirds, sea turtles, and sharks to the brink of extinction, as the species are most vulnerable to bycatch due to their movement across international water.

Further, the marine ecosystem is under various pressures such as overfishing by commercial fishing, which has led to a drastic reduction in daily catch for artisanal fisheries and impacted on the marine megafauna species.

According to a 2020 study, it is estimated that there are around 5,000 artisanal fishermen operating in the country. During the period, 77% of fishermen had seabirds (mainly Cape Verde shearwater) as bycatch, 55% caught turtles and 86% caught sharks.
This has had a negative impact on biodiversity, contributing to localized extinctions of endemic seabird species. Further, bycatch reduces fishing efficiency as releasing non-target species takes time in addition to bait loss, and fishing gear damage.

The implementation of the GOS approach started in Cabo Verde in 2016 with Fundação Maio Biodiversidade (FMB), a local conservation NGO, to strengthen ownership and engagement of fishermen in the protection of the marine environment.

The initiative was a success, with more than 130 fishermen engaged in the program to date. The fishermen have been trained on standardized bycatch data collection, marine species identification, tracking artisanal fishing vessels, understanding the marine food chain, and reporting fishing incidents such as the illegal, unreported, and unregulated (IUU) fishing activities.

In addition, the fishermen receive trainings to implement bycatch mitigation techniques including safe release of species bycaught during fishing activities and are incentivized through provision of fish handling and preservation systems, and improved safety systems among others.

"The Guardians of the Sea are fishermen who have become the voice of our oceans, committed to protecting endangered species and advocating for sustainable fishing practices", said Thais Macedo, Marine Program Coordinator at FMB.

Soon after, BirdLife and its partners expanded this initiative and established seven GOS programmes on other islands in the Cabo Verde Archipelago including Sal, Boa Vista, São Vicente, Santiago, São Nicolau, Fogo, and Brava.

The success and positive feedback that is received for the GOS program in Cabo Verde has also led to consideration of expanding the GOS program to other countries in West Africa such as Senegal, Mauritania, Guinea-Bissau, and beyond. "Implication of fishers in the conservation of the marine life is a key stone of our marine strategy. Lessons learnt from the Cabo Verde experience will help us in our aim to expand such initiative in the West Africa region and beyond," concluded Ahmed Diame, Sustainable Fisheries & Bycatch Reduction Manager at BirdLife International.
STRENGTHENING BIRDLIFE’S KEY BIODIVERSITY AREAS (KBAS) PROGRAM IN AFRICA

By Fred Barasa

Key Biodiversity Areas (KBAs) are the common global currency for sites of biodiversity significance, the majority of which currently are Important Bird and Biodiversity (IBAs) - KBAs identified for birds. Currently, there are 16,337 listed KBAs all over the world, with Sub-Saharan and North Africa hosting 1720 and 278 sites, respectively.

A key aspect of the KBA programme is the regular documentation and updating of sites, including through KBA monitoring (where data on the Status, Pressures/threats and responses are captured), with results being compiled in the World Bird and Biodiversity Database (WBDB) and disseminated widely for action through the BirdLife Data Zone and the Key Biodiversity Areas website.

However, over the years several challenges have been documented in the implementation of the programme including lack of capacity and resources, and lack of good monitoring data that hampers partly the achievement of the programme objectives as anticipated. Since May 2023, efforts have been put in place to provide both scientific and technical support to BirdLife partners on to updating and documenting sites and species against the IBA criteria and KBA standards.

BirdLife’s KBA (Important Bird Area) programme has been running since the 1970s, first in the European Union followed by other regions like Africa where it began in 2000. Across the continent, BirdLife is working with 26 partner countries to implement KBA programmes. Further BirdLife is also working in the Congo Basin in the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC), Republic of Congo, and Gabon through a KBA project funded by the Bezos Earth Fund.

The project, which is also being carried out in the Americas in Bolivia, Colombia, Ecuador, and Peru aims at identifying a comprehensive network of KBAs in the two regions thereby enabling expansion of protection and conservation of these areas as the most important sites for nature. In Algeria, a non-BirdLife partner country, a new KBA has been proposed with assistance from the secretariat after they provided data.
Through online training, eight partners including the Society for the Conservation of Nature of Liberia (SCNL), Nature Mauritania, Nature Tanzania, Association Burundaise pour la protection de la Nature (ABN), Nature Conservation Egypt (NCE), Association Les Amis des Oiseaux (AAO)/ BirdLife in Tunisia, GREPOM/ BirdLife Morocco, and BirdLife Zimbabwe have undergone training in data capture using a global standardized monitoring form. The form captures information on the status, pressures, and responses at the IBAs/KBAs. Further partners have received training on updating of the above collected information into the WBDB, in addition to carrying out analysis of this data.

“This training is timely and will go a long way in building capacity of NCE’s KBA monitoring program. The assessment will be instrumental in understanding the status and developing conservation measures,” says Haitham Mossad, Conservation Director at NCE.

“This training is timely and will go a long way in building capacity of NCE’s KBA monitoring program. The assessment will be instrumental in understanding the status and developing conservation measures,” notes Nouma Watt, Nature Mauritania’s Executive Director.

The status of the WBDB last updates was also checked, which was used as basis for identifying partners who had been updating the database in addition to ascertaining their knowledge and capacity in the monitoring and use of the WBDB. In addition, BirdLife Botswana received training on uploading information on IBAs in Danger into the WBDB.

A major aspect of the program is the involvement of various local experts and stakeholders in the identification, monitoring, and documentation of KBAs, through the KBA National Co-ordination Groups. Consequently, a growing number of countries including Kenya, Uganda, Ghana, Guinea, Liberia, Malawi, Nigeria, South Africa, and Madagascar, BirdLife partners are leading on or are active members of KBA National Coordination Groups., working with other organizations to promote KBA conservation in their country. From the trainings and collaboration between various stakeholders, it is envisaged that more KBA sites will be identified, support to partners and non-BirdLife partners to identify and monitor KBAs enhanced, in addition to the timely update of the World Database of KBAs to inform decision making.
NATURE TANZANIA TACKLES
BELIEF-BASED KILLING OF
VULTURES IN TANZANIA

By Alpha Mfilinge

Seated in the sunny morning Zemu Ngwesele chats animatedly with a colleague. Ngwesele is part of a group of 20 traditional healers who ply their trade in Meatu District, part of the Makao Wildlife Management Area (WMA) in Northern Tanzania. Today, Ngwesele and his colleagues are waiting to get into the local town hall, where Nature Tanzania (BirdLife Partner) will be making a presentation on vultures. Once inside the hall, and after a round of introduction, Ngwesele and his colleagues listen intently as Emmanuel Mgimwa, Nature Tanzania’s Executive Director highlights vulture declines in the country.

In the last years, Africa has witnessed a drastic decline of vulture species driven by numerous factors particularly poisoning, belief-based use, electrocution and collision with energy infrastructure, habitat destruction, among others. Poisoning accounting for more than 60% of vulture deaths is driven by numerous factors, including illegal trade, human-wildlife conflicts, traditional uses, and indiscriminate pesticide use. Belief-based killings, where vultures’ parts are used to make traditional medicine to cure ailments or bring good luck. It is the second largest cause of vulture deaths, accounting for approximately 29% of vulture mortality on the continent.

In Tanzania, the issue of belief-based killings of vultures has been reported as one of the wildlife poisoning drivers in the country. In some of the Protected Areas, there have been reports of wildlife poisoning incidences and dead vultures found at the scene. In 2019, following an elephant poisoning incident in the Selous Game Reserve in Southern Tanzania, 10 vultures were killed and in 2020, over 50 vultures were killed in Wami Mbiki Game Reserve in the eastern part of the country. Other incidences have been reported in Maswa Game reserve and Serengeti National Park.
Recognising the urgency of this crisis, Nature Tanzania began implementing the project at Makao MWA in 2022. This project, funded by the Darwin Initiative through BirdLife International seeks to establish collaborations with traditional healers to address the threat of belief-based killings of vultures.

"The practice of poisoning, capture and sale of vultures to traditional healers is a significant problem in the country. Vulture parts particularly heads, claws and feathers are much sought by healers as they are used in traditional medicine," says Mgimwa.

Since inception of the project, there have been several meetings and workshops between Nature Tanzania and traditional healers, with 34 out of 150 registered traditional healers in Makao WMA engaged so far on saving vultures from extinction. A key output from these discussions has been the need to use plant-based alternatives, as substitutes to vultures' body parts. The traditional healers identified a plant (locally known as viloto) - said to have similar uses to that of vulture head in traditional medicine. Following these engagements, the traditional healers have been increasingly using this plant in their trade.

"These meetings have been very instrumental in raising awareness among traditional healers in our District, on the need to increasingly use plant alternatives to vulture parts", says Ngwesele , who is also the Chairperson of traditional healers from Mbushi village, one of the 10 villages in Makao WMA.

Following these deliberations, Nature Tanzania made a follow-up on the named alternative plant for vulture parts, aiming to get the specimen scientifically identified, and checking for its IUCN (International Union for Conservation of Nature) status and distribution in Tanzania.

In addition, Nature Tanzania has engaged a supplier of the plant who indicated that the plant is readily available in three regions in the country including Katavi Region, Singida Region, and Kigoma Region. Consequently, Nature Tanzania Species Conservation Officer and the supplier, visited Kigoma Region and collected specimens of viloto which were taken to Muhimbili University of Health and Allied Science (MUHAS), Institute of Traditional Medicine, for further analysis.

The alternative plant was identified as Biophytum crassipes by a botanist at MUHAS, and more follow-up on its distribution and IUCN status continues. “After finding it difficult to find vultures in their areas, we worked hard to identify an alternative for the vulture part. We were able to identify Biophytum crassipes as an alternative, and the plant works similarly to the vulture parts," notes Ngwesele.

“I am also encouraging my fellow traditional healers not to use vultures in traditional medicine and to use plant alternatives,” he adds.

It was ascertained that Biophytum crassipes is readily available in the rainy season than the dry seasons. Traditional healers are now using the plant for their trade and have resolved agreed to stop using the vulture parts in preparation of traditional medicines and beliefs, as they will be focusing on the alternative plant. Further, Nature Tanzania is working on some trials to ascertain whether the plant can be grown in Makao WMA so that the plant can be easily found by traditional healers. Nature Tanzania aims at scaling up the project and reach out to traditional healers in other villages in Makao who are using vulture parts for medicine.

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By Aliou Diallo

Yamoussa Cissé, grew up in Kogon Village, Yattiya sector, located in Tristao Islands, Northern Guinea – one of the islands which form the border of Guinea Republic and Guinea Bissau. The islands are characterized by expansive sandbanks, estuaries, mud, and mangrove forests which host numerous species including sea turtles and crocodiles. Guinea’s coastal area extend 320 km² dotted by inlets, estuaries, and numerous offshore islands. The country’s mangrove area extends up to 40 km inland.

Mangroves play a vital role in coastal ecology, securing and sustaining coastal communities. They protect coastlines from extreme storms, erosion, and wave action. They also act as carbon sink sequestering 3-5% more carbon unit per area – more than any other forest system. In addition, mangroves help local communities to have an abundance of fish resources, through facilitating fish reproduction throughout the coastline particularly shrimps and oysters. Despite this importance, mangroves ecosystem in the country is now under threat.

The population of Tristao Islands fluctuates between 15,000 and 20,000, depending on the number of fishing camps set up, is sustained by exploitation of natural resources and mangroves.

Since 2019, Guinée Ecologie (BirdLife Partner in Guinea) has been involved in the restoration of mangroves in the country. Between 2019 and 2022, Guinee Ecologie carried out a restoration project in the Tristao Islands. The project supported by the Foundation Audemar Watkins, led to the restoration of over 1,400 hectares of mangrove in the Tristao Islands.
The Tristao islands are essential habitats for wildlife and fishery resources. Tristao has been a Ramsar site since 1992 and has had marine protected area (MPA) status since 2013, with the aim of ensuring the protection and participatory conservation of biodiversity and socio-cultural heritage to improve the living conditions of communities. It is a breeding ground for several species of fish and marine turtles, and over 200 species of birds have been identified, hence the need to restore this critical ecosystem, argues Mamadou Diawara, Guinée Ecologie Executive Director.

Building on the success of the PAPBIO project launched a second mangrove restoration project in the Konkouré delta in the Dubréka prefecture in January 2023. Funded by the same donor, Audemars Watkins Foundation, this 3-year project is being implemented in collaboration with the Ministry of the Environment and Sustainable Development, through the Guinean Office of National Parks and Wildlife Reserves (OGPNRF), and local communities in the project area.

The aim is to increase the mangrove area to 500 ha, including 100 ha of mangrove to be reforested, 100 ha through assisted natural regeneration (ANR), 50 ha through the restoration of rice paddies and 250 ha through activities aimed at reducing pressure on mangrove wood, notably the promotion of solar salt production, the construction of ovens and improved stoves, and fencing through surveillance. But also promoting good sustainable production practices.

Before starting on the project, Guinée Ecologie conducted awareness raising exercises in the local communities, which Cissé took part in.

“We're happy that this project is in place, and I’ll be there with all my heart to support the project so that we can achieve our objectives. As soon as reforestation activities are launched, we're going to deploy ourselves to reforest as many hectares of mangrove as possible. In any case we are happy that Guinée Ecologie engaged us in this project. We’re looking forward to the reforestation activities so that we can make our contribution”, said Cissé.

Early Gains

To this end, information and site identification activities for reforestation, Assisted Natural Regeneration (ANR) and the restoration of abandoned rice fields in the Konkouré delta prefecture were carried out with local communities. Further, a socio-economic survey of the pilot sites for the Konkouré delta restoration project was carried out by the Regional Partnership for Coastal and Marine Conservation (PRCM), a working groups set up and local agreements signed.

For Ousmane Bangoura, head of the Dofili/Kopérin Sector on the mainland side, is doing a remarkable job in the Konkouré Delta. “We see this restoration project as a major step forward in protecting the environment in general, and our mangrove ecosystem. For this reason, we can only appreciate this initiative. We're going to support all the players involved in this project,” he enthuses.

As part of project implementation activities, Guinee Ecologie began restoration campaigns in August 2023. In the same vein, the project will support communities in market garden production, oyster farming, solar salt production, the distribution of 50 chorchor ovens for fish smokers, and 100 improved fireplaces to be made and distributed to households. Awareness-raising, information and communication activities will be carried out in favor of mangrove conservation.

“Our long-term commitment remains the sustainable conservation of mangrove ecosystems in the Tristao Islands of Guinea. And to achieve this, we strive to ensure the implementation of concrete measures for the sustainable management of mangroves and the reduction of anthropic pressure by promoting alternative techniques, supporting income-generating activities and natural resource management” concludes Diawara.

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Located in Central Africa, about 320 km off mainland Africa lies São Tomé and Príncipe (STP), a Small Island Developing State, covering about 1001 Km². One third of the country’s territory is covered by native and secondary forest which is home to hundreds of endemic species of fauna and flora, such as the endangered Dwarf Ibis (*Bostrychia bocagei*), or the giant begonia (*Begonia baccata*) a rarity for such a small archipelago. Moreover, its estimated population of 223,000 inhabitants (National Institute of Statistics, 2021), increases by around 2% annually (World Bank data), a growth that exacerbates the need for housing.

Traditionally, most houses in STP are built with wood, due to low purchasing power from the local population to acquire other construction materials, leading most people to revert to logging to build their accommodations, which in turn puts more pressure on the local natural resources. There are buildings made of imported cement within the largest cities, but those require sand, which is then extracted from the local beaches, causing serious ecological damage.

The challenge to build sustainably in STP, is therefore to reduce the use of these two natural materials, wood and sand - whose management and intensity of consumption, have caused serious environmental impacts. It is urgent to implement adapted housing policies, with innovative and environmentally friendly techniques, to ensure sustainability and social impact.
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The Ké Bêtôdô initiative.

Ké Bêtôdô, "Smart House" in local dialect, started in 2022 with an advocacy and communication campaign highlighting the numerous opportunities and advantages of these techniques and materials to various stakeholders, from state institutions to the private sector and the civil society.

Implemented by BirdLife in STP and Natural Arquitetura, a construction company, this initiative began to promote conservation-based enterprises, with the main purpose of reducing impact on natural resources especially by communities close to the protected areas, as well as creating a more comprehensive vision of the use of alternative techniques and materials in large scale construction.

The initiative is based on two pillars. The first pillar focuses on reducing the use of sand, by decreasing the use of cement bricks; and deforestation by using only wood to develop the structures of buildings, and clay and plant fibers (dried grass, sawdust, and coconut fibres) to cover the walls. These materials have many benefits, like creating lighter materials in buildings, and using clay’s cooling properties to naturally combat the tropical heat, without the use of artificial air conditioning devices that have high energy consumption.

A second pillar of the Ké Bêtôdô initiative is promotion of recycling, turning solid waste like glass bottles into powder and compressed plastic into plaques or integrated into walls as support or decoration.

'I believe that the realisation of the benefits that the efficient use of these natural materials and alternative techniques bring to people’s lives, through their continued practice over time, has the potential to create new habits in the Santomean population and gradually transform the national building culture.I noticed in the people I worked with in São Tomé that the usual fear of the new quickly gave way to enchantment at the beauty, ease and constructive efficiency of the techniques presented, using materials as simple and natural as earth and plant fibres,' says Márcio Holanda, CEO of Natural Arquitetura.

During the first phase of this initiative in 2022, BirdLife was able to meet with various local stakeholders to better analyse the potential of these techniques within various sectors of STP, like supply and purchase of raw materials, and understanding local technical capacities while at the same time undergoing an awareness campaign using various audiovisual materials to involve communities and a workshop and webinar to potentialize investors. This phase successfully created a network of state institutions, other NGOs (Non-Governmental Organization), and the private sector championing this initiative.

This year, the second phase of Ké Bêtôdô is focusing on the theoretical and practical training of 17 local architects, engineers, and builders, culminating in an exhibition of products made by the trainees and the launch of a manual of techniques already adapted to the reality of STP.

'Initially there was a feeling of strangeness about the material (...) but during this workshop we could see the possibilities that clay offers in combination with other materials [and how], gradually we can reduce the amount of wood that is used in civil construction,' notes Waldemar Figueiredo, an architect and graduate of Ké Bêtôdô.
Currently, interest in this initiative is growing among civil society representatives, as well as private interests looking for sustainable alternatives aimed at ecotourism structures, like ecolodges. BirdLife’s next step will be to focus on potential consumers through awareness-raising mechanisms, making people feel interested in building with these techniques. Then, ensure that those interested which were already identified during the training, have the necessary means (materials, human resources, skills) at their disposal to implement these techniques. This work will be done in partnership with the local government, through an extensive advocacy campaign, thus stimulating the adoption of new and more sustainable housing policies and guaranteeing the legal framework.

“We are very interested to know that we have alternatives for building houses in the country, which helps to combat the felling and destruction of our forests,” says Jukisia Salvador, Advisor to the President of the Republic.

The educational sector is also envisioned in this initiative, by including these techniques as disciplines in courses related to civil construction. It is envisaged that the Ké Bêtôdô initiative will go a long way in meeting the housing construction needs of the growing population of STP, without jeopardising the natural resources and rich biodiversity of these wonderful islands.

“The sooner people become interested in environmentally sustainable building techniques, the better they will be prepared to “build without destroying” and thus to leave a healthy country and environment for future generations. This is the ultimate purpose of the “Ké Bêtôdô” initiative,” concludes Agostinho Fernandes, Head of Projects Office for São Tomé and Príncipe.

This initiative can influence the national economy on several levels including in the primary sector, with the supply of plant fibres; the secondary sector with the production of natural blocks; and the tertiary sector with the provision of services by people trained in this field.
PROMOTING COMMUNITY-BASED MONITORING AND CONSERVATION OF VULTURES IN NIGERIA

By Oladapo Soneye

Across Africa, vulture populations have declined catastrophically, with the continent witnessing declines of up to 97% in some areas, driven by poisoning, belief-based use, and electrocution by power infrastructure among other factors. Nigeria is home to seven out of the eleven vultures that exist in Africa. These include the Egyptian Vulture (*Neophron percnopterus*), Hooded Vulture (*Necrosyrtes monachus*), White-backed Vulture (*Gyps africanus*), White-headed Vulture (*Trigonoceps occipitalis*), Ruppell’s Griffon (*Gyp rueppellii*), Palm-nut Vulture (*Gypohierax angolensis*), and the Lappet-faced Vulture (*Torgos tracheliotus*). Six of the seven vulture species found in the country are threatened, of the six, only the Hooded vulture has remnant viable populations in some parts of the country. In addition to the Palm-nut Vulture.

Vultures, otherwise known as nature’s clean-up crew, play a critical role in the environment by removing carcasses from the environment, which would otherwise have negative impacts on environmental and human health, if left to accumulate.

Since 2017, the Nigerian Conservation Foundation (NCF) has launched a series of activities nationwide to halt the decline of the vultures and promote the recovery of the extant populations. These activities include a nationwide survey to identify remnant populations, identification of major threats and mitigative interventions to these threats.

From 2019 to 2020, NCF mapped out the habitat of viable vulture populations, the goal is to promote vulture population through collaboration with two support zone communities in the species natural range. In 2023, NCF secured a grant from Indianapolis Zoo to implement a project titled “Supporting Community-based Monitoring and Conservation for Vulture Populations in Identified Vulture Safe Zones Across Nigeria”

The project which began in May 2023 is in line with the “Vulture Safe Zone (VSZ)” approach - a method of protecting natural vulture populations in the natural range.
The Vulture Safe Zone (VSZ) project is one of NCF’s efforts to protect remnant vulture populations in their natural environment, support sustainable livelihoods, preserve the ecosystem benefits of the species, and promote peaceful and positive coexistence between the people and the vultures. VSF activities are currently going on in two priority sites in the eastern part of Nigeria, namely, Awka-Etiti, a region of about 105km.sq and the communities with a size of about 120km.sq in Anambra and Enugu state, southwestern Nigeria respectively.

NCF has been carrying out a number of project implementation activities including stakeholders engagements to identify threats and design livelihood alternatives to associated threats, in addition to training of the local community on vulture population monitoring. The activities held in July 2023, in Idemili South Local Government Area (LGA), Anambra State brought together 20 individuals including eleven men and nine women identified as volunteers in the vulture conservation project.

‘This collaboration with NCF is vital for the communities as they now understand that the protection of these vultures is essential to the health of the community’, notes Emeka Emmanuel Igwe, a Community Coordinator.

The training in focused on raising the capacity of community-based volunteers within the zones to methodically observe and report the trends in vulture populations in their community. The volunteers were also supported with monitoring equipment which includes six binoculars, two GPS units, two mobile phones, data sheets and other writing materials to assist in the monitoring.

The monitoring activities is still ongoing, and the results will be critical in making further decisions to protect the species and promote the collaboration with these communities. There are also plans to support the livelihood of members of these communities as the project progresses.

As part of the International Vulture Awareness Day (IVAD) on 2nd September 2023, NCF further carried awareness activities about the importance of vultures in the country, highlighting efforts on the VSZ project. NCF continues to collaborate with stakeholders including local communities to protect the endangered species while promoting sustainable pursuits that protect local livelihoods and threatened species in the ecosystem.
The Echo Parakeet (*Alexandrinus eques*) is a medium-sized parrot, endemic to Mauritius. A closely related sub-species is now extinct on nearby La Réunion. The Echo Parakeet feeds on a large number of endemic fruits in remnant native forests of Mauritius, and nests in cavities in large endemic trees. Current threats include competition and or predation from introduced birds and mammals, food scarcity due to degrading forests, loss of habitat and introduced avian diseases particularly Psittacene Beak and Feather Disease).

Once widespread in Mauritius, the Echo Parakeet is the sole surviving parrot of the Mascarenes. It neared extinction in the 1970s. From a widely distributed bird in Mauritius, the species dwindled to around 20 birds limited to the Black River Gorges National Park, in southwest Mauritius.

The bird owes its survival to conservation works initiated by organisations including International Council for Bird Preservation (later, BirdLife International), the Government of Mauritius, the Mauritian Wildlife Foundation (MWF) and its collaborators since the 1970’s.

From March to July every year, some of the Mauritian Wildlife Foundation field staff concentrate on the off-breeding season management of the Echo Parakeet. This can involve quite demanding tasks such as the maintenance of nest boxes which requires agility and strength.

“The Echo Parakeet project is demanding and rests on highly trained and skilled, fit, and determined Mauritanian and expatriate staff”, says Vikash Tatayah, MWF Conservation Director.

Nest boxes have been one of the initiatives which has helped the Echo Parakeet’s population rise through the years. They have given the bird a safe space to lay eggs while natural cavities have become rarer. These nest boxes have been specifically designed to prevent monkeys from extending their hands to steal eggs or chicks, which has given a boost to the breeding outcomes.
Early morning, field biologists Josua Hollandais and Jauffrey Maurer are already set to perform some maintenance work. The main task of the day is to remove a beehive that they observed a few days earlier in one of the many nest boxes in the surroundings. These nest boxes, of which over 150 have been set up in the Black River Gorges National Park, have been designed to provide supplementary nesting sites to the Echo Parakeet.

Equipped with rucksacks, pruning saws, binoculars, a bee-smoker, beekeeping suits and climbing gear, the team plunges into the forest. A 30-minute walk is necessary to reach this nest box. On the way, the two team members take the opportunity to clear the path with the help of the pruning saws. Any invasive plants which obstruct the track are cut and removed.

Arriving at the site, the team observes three Echo Parakeets flying and looking agitated as if disturbed by something inside the box, placed on a tree 5 meters from the ground. Josua and Jauffrey take a close look at the nest box through their binoculars, soon realizing that bees are no longer present. Jauffrey puts on his beekeeping suit, just in case, and proceeds to climb the tree with the help of his climbing equipment and the strength of his arms pulling on the rope to help him reach the nest box.

Once there, he observes signs of the recent presence of rats that have been inside the nest box to eat the honeycomb. The honeycomb is removed and the wood shavings, usually put inside the box as nesting material for the Echo Parakeets, are replaced. Thanks to these efforts, the nest box is functional again for the Echo Parakeets.

“This can happen. We must make sure that the nests are exempted of competitors. Otherwise, the Echo parakeets won’t be able to use them”, says Maurer.

The removal of competitors like bees, rats, Asian Mynahs and Indian Ring-necked Parakeet from Echo Parakeet nest boxes is one of the many tasks done during the non-breeding season. Other works consist of cleaning the boxes, replace supports and rusted bolts, changing the boxes themselves if they are beyond repair, and when back at the field station, entering data and observations and writing reports. “All these tasks are essential, each one of them contributes largely to the conservation of this species, to ensure that the Echo Parakeet population continues to thrive.” notes Josua Hollandais.

The team also provides supplementary food (specially formulated grain-based pellets) in the feeders installed in the natural clearing of the field station. Feeder attendance watches helps to identify all individual Echo Parakeets that visit the feeders, checking their health condition and seeing whether they need to be caught for ringing.

The metal leg rings allow the individual identification of each bird through a unique colour combination. The field team can estimate the population size and gather data on the life history, health, and productivity of individuals in the wild. Work ends at dusk for field work and into the night for desk work after a tiring but satisfying day.
The Echo Parakeet project is demanding and rests on highly trained and skilled, fit, and determined Mauritian and expatriate staff.

Thanks to the Mauritian Wildlife Foundation, BirdLife Partner on Mauritius, and its collaborators, the Echo Parakeet has increased, increasing from 20 birds to some 700 individuals today. An achievement that has seen the bird’s status on the International Union for the Conservation of Nature (IUCN) red list of threatened species move from ‘Critically Endangered’ to ‘Vulnerable’. We have also collaborated with colleagues on Reunion Island on a feasibility study for the reintroduction of the Echo Parakeet there, where it has gone extinct.

“The Echo Parakeet is regarded as one of the most successful parrot restoration projects in the World and has employed a large suite of techniques including brood and clutch manipulations, captive breeding and reinforcement, translocation, predator and disease management, habitat restoration, supplementary feeding and nest box provision. It has become a reference for parrot conservation worldwide. This makes us really proud”, concludes Tatayah.

The Mauritian Wildlife Foundation would like to thank the Mauritius Commercial Bank, the Sir Jean Moilin Ah Chuen Foundation, Chester Zoo (UK) and the National Parks and Conservation Service for contributing to saving the Echo Parakeet.
Here is a fabulous opportunity to join our 2023 Global Flyways campaign, celebrating how people and birds connect us and unite our global efforts to save nature.

Find Out More

www.birdlife.org