



Broad-billed Sandpiper, Geelbek

TREVOR HARDAKER

of Red-necked Phalaropes remained at Velddrif. Common Redshanks enjoyed some attention at De Plaat in Velddrif, at Geelbek in the West Coast National Park, in Walvis Bay and at Mile 4 Salt Works. A Broad-billed Sandpiper was also reported from Geelbek.

Several Pectoral Sandpipers were recorded, including two at Strandfontein

Sewage Works and another two at a farm dam near Bapsfontein in Gauteng. Singletons appeared at Sunset Dam near Lower Sabie in the Kruger National Park, at Houtrivier Dam and at Rooisand Nature Reserve.

There was a glut of Green Sandpiper records. The Kruger National Park hosted birds at a pool near the Crocodile Bridge Gate, at the Gardenia Hide close to Malelane Gate, near Olifants camp, along the new loop just past Ngotso Dam and at the bridge over the Luvuvhu River near the Pafuri picnic site. Elsewhere, the species was seen at Rietvlei Nature Reserve and Northern Farms in Gauteng, at Leopard Creek Golf Estate

near Malelane and at Toronto Pan in Welkom, as well as from Kavinga Safari Camp along the Zambezi River, in Gorongosa National Park and, perhaps most surprisingly, at Die Poele below Krone in the Huab River in the Namib Desert.

THE BEST OF THE REST

There wasn't too much else to report during the review period, but the best records included a Basra Reed Warbler at Kavinga Safari Camp, a Spotted Crake at the Sappi Wetlands in Stanger and a Western Marsh Harrier at Marievale Bird Sanctuary.

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None of the records included here has been adjudicated by any of the subregion's Rarities Committees.

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MICHELLE RISI

NOTEWORTHY

First record of Chilean Skua in the Indian Ocean

The Chilean Skua *Catharacta chilensis* breeds in southern Chile and Patagonia, dispersing north as far as Peru and occasionally reaching southern Brazil. It is included on the African list on the basis of a bird photographed at Inaccessible Island in the Tristan da Cunha archipelago in November–December 2009 (Ryan 2010, *Bull. Afr. Bird Club* 17: 217–219). We report the second African record and the first from the Indian Ocean.

On 27 November 2017 a Chilean Skua (above, on left) was seen at Vrystaat Point on the south-west coast of Marion Island, the larger of

the two Prince Edward Islands, some 2000 kilometres south-east of Cape Agulhas. It was part of a skua 'club' containing 21 non-breeding Brown (Subantarctic) Skuas. The bird was still present at the site on 17 December, when it was observed behaving aggressively towards a Brown Skua. Its behaviour mirrors that of the bird seen at Inaccessible Island, which also joined a skua club for several days and was involved in frequent interactions with the local skuas.

The Chilean Skua immediately stood out because of its dark cap, rich rufous underparts and bi-coloured bill.

It was also slightly smaller than the Brown Skuas. The only slightly unusual feature was the presence of rather prominent pale back streaks, which are more typical of Brown Skuas and might indicate a hybrid bird (the two species apparently interbred locally in Patagonia). However, Olsen and Larsson (1997, *Skuas and Jaegers*) report that some Chilean Skuas from the core of their range can show extensive pale hackles. Marion Island is roughly 4000 kilometres farther east than Inaccessible Island, greatly extending the vagrant range of this species.

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