



KARIN COETZER

BirdLife Northern Gauteng **CONSERVING VULTURES**

At BirdLife Northern Gauteng we take our conservation responsibilities very seriously, with members actively participating in citizen science initiatives. We are also the Local Conservation Group for the Waterberg IBA, which includes one of the largest remaining breeding populations of the Cape Vulture.

With an eye on Vulture Awareness Day in September 2016, our committee decided to make a special effort for vulture conservation. Our September meeting was dedicated to vultures and we were fortunate to enlist André Botha, an expert on these birds, as our guest speaker. Accomplished bird artist Karin Coetzer is one of our members and donated two of her portraits of a Lappet-faced Vulture for a raffle on the night.

BirdLife South Africa's announcement that the Lappet-faced Vulture would be Bird of the Year 2017 coincided perfectly with our initiative. We were delighted to be able to sponsor the poster available with this issue of *African Birdlife*, which will help to raise awareness of the plight of vultures.



OSTRICH A JOURNAL FOR AFRICA

O*strich*, BirdLife South Africa's publication of peer-reviewed research, is the premier journal for African ornithology, with abstracts indexed in all the major indexing services. The most recent issue (volume 87, issue 3) was published at the end of October 2016 and can be accessed at www.tandfonline.com/toc/tost20/87/3

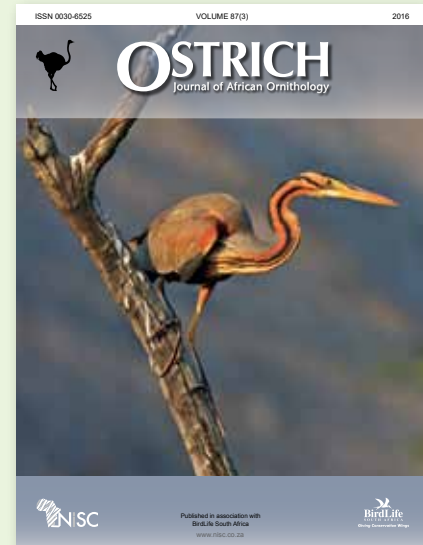
For this issue, research articles on species from parrots to vultures and cranes were submitted from the north of the continent (wintering waterbird assemblages in southern Tunisia) to the south (alarm calling in the Cape Rock-jumper). The diversity of research being undertaken in Africa is highlighted, from radio-tracking (of forest birds in Tanzania) to population estimates (of breeding birds of the Tinhosas Islands in the Gulf of Guinea). The issue also features several articles on conservation biology. The alarming decline of the Great Bustard in Morocco, for example, is generating much discussion, as are

the threats to the Crowned Cranes of Uganda.

Researchers who have committed their lives to the conservation and research of Africa's birds will come under the spotlight in a new series about these ornithological legends. Terry Oatley had agreed to write about his life and research, but sadly passed away before completing the article. In this issue, his daughter, Jenny Freeman, kindly provided us with a personal insight into his life in 'Of robins and Rachmaninov'.

In acknowledgement of the importance of French as a dominant language in much of Africa, all abstracts for this volume have been translated into French.

Given that the socio-political context of Africa has meant that much of the landscape has been inaccessible, the continent is a treasure trove for future ornithological research. There is huge scope to examine the challenges faced by our unique birdlife as global conditions change. It is my hope that research



conducted on Africa's birds will be published in Africa's journals and not exported overseas. *Ostrich* will continue to strive to be the journal of choice for the publication of research on the birds that make our continent their home, as well as of articles highlighting issues of conservation importance.

ALAN LEE, EDITOR: *OSTRICH*