



Wakkerstroom Bird Club

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Sorry to repeat ourselves.....but as mentioned in last month's Newsletter Number 40 we have to increase annual subs to R130 per family per year. Reasons quoted were general cost increase, particularly including labour, petrol, herbicide for the vlei etc. We are hoping to extend our spraying and alien removals efforts during the remainder of this summer.

Another option that the Committee has discussed and is, at this point, keen to take up is that of affiliation with BirdLife South Africa. This would give us a voice at regular BLSA Forums along with other clubs with similar interests and concerns and also help with fundraising by virtue of our association with the national body. The BirdLife South Africa logo will be added to the normal letterhead above. We hope to finalize this early in 2016. This however comes at a cost of USD1 (approximately R15) per family member and is in turn paid to BirdLife International and not retained locally. All clubs pay this fee.

This will be the first fee increase in three years and we believe that Wakkerstroom Bird Club represents good value at R130pa and hope that members will continue to support our efforts!
Brian Guerin.

Whatsapp? you say,.....read on!

Another initiative, piloted by Graham Spencer, is our new system of reporting AND receiving news quickly of interesting and unusual sightings in our area. He has set up a group (Wakkies Bird Club) on Whatsapp, the free service available on most cell phones these days. All you need to do to join the group is to contact Graham (082 576 2108) and ask to be included in the group. Sightings will appear on your Whatsapp as and when they are received.

A few caveats exist however:

1. It is recommended that you don't reply to every message with e.g. Well Done, Thanks, etc. this clogs the system and means also that everybody in the group gets this message which can be irritating and to no real advantage,
2. Be aware of the time of day that you send your message, not all of the group wants to hear of Tuluvers even at 5 in the morning,
3. Try to be a little selective in the species you report, this will come with exposure to the system!
4. There is an option in the settings on your phone within the group to mute the notification tone for the particular group if you wish.

Contact Graham if you need any help with this. Thanks, Graham, for introducing this step forward for the club!

Diary for January, 2016.

Saturday 9th – Vlei Walk, let's try for 06h30 start to start the year with a long list!

Tuesday 12th – a short outing to start off with, we'll twitch the airport road and surrounds, down to Martin's Dam and to the end of the runway for a different view of the vlei/town. Depart the Library at 07h30.

Monday 18th – BirdLife Northern Natal (Newcastle) – Andre Botha, Manager of the EWT Bird of Prey Programme (Bopp) will give a talk on his work.

Wednesday 20th – Mauritz (Mo) de Bruyn (Lawyer and Environmental Monitor will relate his experiences in the field in his challenging job. Mo is an employee of the Endangered Wildlife Trust and is currently based in Wakkerstroom.

Saturday 23rd – A Bird ID course will be held at the BirdLife South Africa Centre, Wakkerstroom, more details are available from Kristi Garland (083 227 0128) or Claudine Tavelet (083 347 2770) Book soon as the numbers are limited!

Saturday 29th – CAR Count – please pencil this in now, we will need participants, as usual, and high clearance/4*4 vehicles. Please contact Judy-Lynn Wheeler (079 988 7502) to confirm your availability, we would like some new blood, too, as trainees!

That's all for this issue, all that remains is for the Committee to thank you for your willing support during the year and wish everybody a Safe and Blessed Christmas and a Happy, Healthy, Prosperous and bird-filled 2016! AND, please join in all the club activities next year!!

Brian Guerin, (Guest) Editor.

