



## July 2004

### Developing our first area-based crane management strategy: Tsumkwe pans



In July 2004 we visited Tsumkwe (NE Namibia), and met with Dries Alberts and Jacob Kolbooi of the MET and members of the Nyae Nyae Conservancy Management Board and Committee, and the Nyae Nyae Development Foundation. It was a privilege to visit the Nyae Nyae pans, now dry, but it is easy to imagine the hive of activity when the rains arrive, together with all the aquatic birds. With 78 Wattled Cranes recorded in April 2004 and 95 in 1990, this area probably has the largest population in Namibia!

Our crane friends at Tsumkwe have decided to start implementing the following area-based strategy:

- Ongoing exchange of information
- Crane data: planning of an aerial survey, ongoing ground surveys, research (feeding; breeding) and training of field workers
- Awareness/education: crane information sheets, poster, teachers' resource pack, slide show and art competition, teacher training
- Community-based natural resource management: developing crane/birding based ecotourism, crane themes in culture and crafts, bird guide training.

We hope to hold our next annual crane workshop at Tsumkwe, where more of you will be able to see the area, meet the local team and share ideas. In the mean time, please contact Dries and Jacob for further information (email [mettskwe@iway.na](mailto:mettskwe@iway.na)). We are also hoping to visit Caprivi and Kavango in September.

### Crane information sheets

The draft information sheets on the Namibia Crane Working Group, and on the crane species of Namibia, are being circulated for comment before being forwarded to relevant river-basin stakeholders, planners and educators.

### Crane surveys and sightings

Lotto Kuushomwa and his colleagues from Rössing Foundation in North Central are planning a crane survey in the Lake Opono area in August. Please let Wilferd Versfeld (email [versfeld@mweb.com.na](mailto:versfeld@mweb.com.na)) know about any Blue Crane sightings in Etosha, and also let us know about crane sightings in any other area.

### Conservation awareness/education

We are working on providing pictures of cranes for each crane area, and also on funding proposals for a crane resource book.



### Please keep in touch!

#### PRAYER OF THE GREAT CRANE

*From the North it came, softly humming the angel's prayer  
Golden manes and grassy plains,  
One and all stopped to stare*

*Upon its wings, the gift of rain, in its heart the promise of  
no more pain  
Thunder rolled and beauty were mould,  
From beyond the blue mountains and sands of see  
For all to hear, even me*

*Drifting upon the currents of wind, they came  
With hope shining through the great crane  
Glistening beauty in simplicity, but only for the sane*

*Where once the young joyfully played  
They now find their promised land decayed  
For man once again intervened  
With cycles and circles of nature once pristine*

*Over concrete jungles and roads in bundles  
As far as the eye could see  
Life was nowhere to be*

*Africa felt their pain and yelled out at man insane  
From amidst the mournful tears, a new land was born,  
the old pierced  
With wisdom and helping hands  
Paradise became known as the valley of eternal dance*

*Where now they gratefully live  
Man is part of this dream – forever to be*

DRIES ALBERTS, Tsumkwe, Namibia July 2004