



January 2005

Annual crane meeting at Tsumkwe and bird count at Nyae Nyae pans on track

Our annual crane meeting at Tsumkwe (28 February to 5 March 2005) is approaching rapidly and there is much enthusiasm for getting together and exchanging ideas. Dries Alberts and Jakob Kolbooi report 380 mm of rain to date, and that there is water in the Nyae Nyae pans. Ten 10 Wattled Cranes have already arrived, as well as flamingos and other waders, and we are looking forward to our bird counts. Plans for the guide training course and local community awareness activities are progressing well, with our exciting partnership with Wilderness Safaris Namibia. We look forward to receiving your feedback and inputs!

Report-back on the AWAC Building on Experience (BoE) training workshop

Lotto Kuushomwa (Ministry of Local Government and Housing, North Central) and Jakob Kolbooi (Ministry of Environment and Tourism, Tsumkwe) represented the NCWG at the Building on Experience (BoE) training workshop for the African Wattled Crane Programme (AWAC) in Wakkerstroom, SA in November 2004. At an AWAC Steering Committee meeting in Maun, Botswana in August 2003 it was noted that the most pressing need was for training in project planning, fundraising, advocacy and the basic management of a non-government organisation (NGO). The workshop was organised by the International Crane Foundation, Endangered Wildlife Trust, BirdLife South Africa, and sponsored by Siemenpuu Foundation. Participants from other countries included Ethiopia, USA, Mozambique, Botswana, Malawi, Zambia, Zimbabwe and South Africa.

The BirdLife International/Royal Society for the Protection of Birds (RSPB) Training Programme – Building on Experience focuses on the participants' experiences, with an emphasis on the participants learning from each other. The major objectives are:

- To increase the effectiveness of organisational leadership and management;
- To develop skills in basic organisational management;
- To stimulate the organisational development of AWAC partners;
- To enhance relationships between AWAC partners;
- To provide the opportunity for international dialogue that will promote the exchange of ideas and experiences and build links among AWAC leaders.

THE AFRICAN WATTLED CRANE PROGRAMME

The African Wattled Crane Programme (AWAC) is a partnership programme between the International Crane Foundation, Endangered Wildlife Trust of SA and the 11 countries where Wattled Cranes (*Grus carunculatus*) are found – Angola, Botswana, DR Congo, Ethiopia, Malawi, Mozambique, Namibia, South Africa, Tanzania, Zambia and Zimbabwe.

Vision: Healthy wetlands for the coexistence of cranes and people in Africa.

Mission: To conserve Wattled Cranes and their habitats by promoting cooperation in and among African nations in partnership with people who depend on these same habitats. To be achieved through conservation programmes that include:

- Research
- Management
- Capacity building
- Education and awareness

Website: http://www.savingcranes.org/abouticf/Africa_Program_Wattled_Crane_Program.asp

The course included an introduction and explanation of workshop techniques, non-government organisations, strategic planning, human resources planning, financial planning, fundraising, grievance and disciplinary procedures, marketing, media and negotiation and conflict management.

The organizers reported a good interaction and participation. For this reason, the course was a success and everyone left the workshop with many new ideas and frameworks within which they could work. Thank you, Rich Beilfuss and Kerry Morrison of AWAC for making it possible for our representatives to participate!



Lotto and Jakob and their AWAC colleagues at Wakkerstroom, SA in November 2004



January 2005

Crane data and information

- We are receiving regular reports of breeding Blue Cranes at Etosha, with one chick at Namutoni. Thank you Wilferd, Kapofi and Gabriel!
- From Caprivi, Carol Murphy reports that Dave Ward is introducing our crane data sheet this month.
- A reminder to everyone else please to test out these crane data sheets, especially if you have any information on possible breeding records.

Awareness and education

- Thank you, Pompie Burger for the excellent article on Wattled Cranes in *Travel News Namibia* (email tnn@iafrica.com), December 2004/January 2005: p30! For information on the Namibia Bird Club, tel. (061) 22 5372 or email nwg@iafrica.com.na.
- We are still looking for pictures of cranes to use for awareness/education activities - please let us know if you have any ideas!

CRANE FOCUS

We are pleased to bring you another in-depth report on cranes, below. Congratulations on this exciting initiative, Dorothy and Mpepo!

First Kavango Crane Survey

by Dorothy Wamunyima and Mathias Mpepo
(Kavango Cranes Working Group)

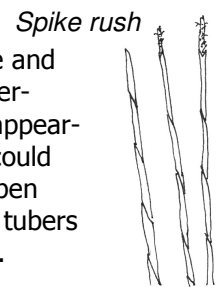
Manyondo village was visited on 9 November 2004 as one of the flood plain areas in Kavango region where cranes used to occur in the olden days. A crane working group consisting of enthusiastic participants has been established at Manyondo village. The village was named after Mapande (Blue Cranes). These are the people who witnessed cranes in the olden days around 1970 including the village headman.

Through the historical background of the Mapande village around 1910, the village was having Blue Cranes and Crowned Cranes. According to their experiences, many Mapanda (Blue Cranes), Mangwangali (Crowned cranes) were seen at Manyondo village in 1970. These Mapanda used to attract many letchwes. Therefore the questions were asked, where are they now and where did they go? They said cranes disappeared due to



Mpepo and crane friends at Mapande in the Manyondo conservancy, Kavango, November 2004 (Photo: Dorothy Wamunyima)

wars, low rainfall, illegal hunting, wildfire and absence of letchwes in the area. One interviewer continued saying he saw cranes appearing when floods receded and four eggs could be found in one nest that is in shallow open water. They used to feed on insects and tubers from plants like spike rush and water lily.



Cranes were treated with respect and regarded as "special birds". Culturally, no-one was allowed to shoot at cranes. Villagers used to dance for up to two consecutive days. Mimicking the cranes they thus decorated their heads with feathers from the crown to resemble the head and imitate the dance of the cranes, these symbolized pride and respect when they danced. Women also used to sing when rocking the baby: "*Nghwali! Mangwangali taga dana*": Cranes are dancing (*Nghwali* = sound made by cranes; *Mangwangali* = crowned cranes; *tagadana* = dancing). They further said, cranes' presence symbolized happiness, good rains, good harvest, good luck and God's blessings.

The visit was well organized. It had been arranged by the headman of the village that they would demonstrate the cranes' dancing style to us but unfortunately the rain disrupted everything. In our next visit, we will be able to take photos of the crane dancers at the village named after cranes (Mapande). The village is now inside the fish farm conservancy area (Mayondo). More information will be collected from other villages/schools in Kavango region early in 2005.

WEBSITE NEWS

We hope to have our own page on the NNF website soon (<http://www.nnf.org.na>)! It will include the information sheets on the Namibia Crane Working Group, our crane species and action plan; pictures of cranes; links to other websites; all past copies of our newsletters; and any other relevant information.