Conservancies gather records of cranes
David Ward, email dward@iway.na

David Ward reports that, in co-operation with Carol Murphy and Sandy Slater-Jones, he introduced a crane data sheet into the Event Books of all community game guards in the East Caprivi conservancies in January 2005. This included training in how to fill in the forms. He recently attended a mid-year audit of all community game guards Event Books. Although no game guards have recorded any crane sightings for the Kwando River system since January this year, there have been several sighting of Wattled Cranes along the Chobe River flood plains in Lusese Conservancy and Salambala Conservancy. The details of these sightings are normally collected at the year-end audit in all conservancies, usually in January. The full list of crane sightings for 2005 will then become available. If you would like to contribute your own sightings of cranes to our standard database, please let us know if you would like a copy of the standard data form.

Funding for website
Good news is that the Namibia Nature Foundation has granted funding to establish our own web page on the NNF website - thank you Dr Chris Brown, Alice Jarvis and Tony Robertson for getting this initiative going!

How can we encourage crane custodians?
At our crane workshop in Bushmanland in March 2005, a proposal was made to introduce a "crane custodian" programme. Who should receive these awards? What form should they take - certificates, or badges on gates? This important incentive programme needs to be initiated at a local level, so please contact us with suggestions or if you would like to become involved!

CRANE FOCUS
Wattled Crane (Grus carunculata) study in the Tsumkwe area, Bushmanland during 2005
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The following results – to be published – are as a result of a study conducted by Veronica Sivhute, a 2nd Year student from the Department of Nature Conservation at the Polytechnic of Namibia during her practical training conducted at Tsumkwe, from January to July 2005.

Figure 1. A comparison of Grus carunculata numbers and rainfall figures between 2004 and 2005 in Bushmanland