

Community involvement in conserving cranes: Caprivi and Kavango



The Caprivi Conservancy Quarterly Planning meeting at Lusese, September 2004

In September 2004 we visited Caprivi and were invited to introduce the Namibia Crane Action Plan and Working Group at the Caprivi Conservancy Quarterly Planning meeting, hosted by the Lusese Conservancy. Groups of 2-3 Wattled Cranes have been recorded in the area, with at least three breeding records. Richard Diggle and Carol Murphy and their colleagues of Integrated Rural Development and Nature Conservation (IRDNC) showed us more about their activities. IRDNC is a non-governmental organization that provides field-based technical support to help communities to form conservancies and to assist these community-based organizations to become fully self-sufficient. We are now working together to produce a data sheet for recording crane sightings, to be used by conservancy rangers during game counts as well as in other crane areas. Carol reports seeing a group of two adults and a juvenile Wattled Crane at Namwe recently and has kindly agreed to be our crane contact person in Caprivi, Tel. (066) 254-721, email cmurphy@iafrica.com.na.

In Kavango, at Rundu, Dorothy Wamunyima told us more about the NNF *Every River Has Its People* project.



Dorothy Wamunyima with Mathias Mpepo (right) and Mike Scott

Dorothy and Mathias Mpepo (an educator at the Maria Mawengere Environmental Education Centre), are enthusiastic about promoting crane awareness, and are planning a series of visits to local communities in this region. They also hope to develop crane themes in art and crafts. At Mahango Nature Reserve we met with the ranger, Mayoba, who is doing regular Wattled Crane surveys there with Mark Paxton. Up to 9 birds at a time have been observed in the reserve, including two breeding pairs. We were fortunate to spot one adult on the floodplains there, near the Giant Baobab tree. Dorothy is our crane contact person for Kavango, Tel. (066) 256-145, email everyriver@nnf.org.na. *A big thank you to all our crane friends in Caprivi and Kavango for your time and interest!*



New partnerships in crane conservation

- Lloyd Camp and Marleece Jordaan of Wilderness Safaris Namibia are keen to help us with basic training for crane/bird guides. We hope to offer this opportunity to two representatives from each of our five crane areas, possibly in March/April 2005.
- We are also exploring ways of working together on crane conservation with Tammie Matson of Conservation Education and Research Centre (CERC).

AWAC training workshop

Lotto Kuushomwa of North Central and Jacob Kolbooi of MET, Tsumkwe will be representing the NCWG at the African Wattled Crane Programme (AWAC) training workshop in Wakkerstroom, SA in November 2004. Congratulations, both of you, and keep us posted!

Crane information sheets

Please forward our crane information sheets to relevant stakeholders, planners and educators. Let us know if you need us to email or post copies to you.

DATA COLLECTION ON CRANES

Lotto Kuushomwa, Gabriel Fillipus and Erastus Sakaria conducted a crane survey in North Central in August 2004. More about this in our next newsletter! We are also tracking down additional sources of information, e.g. from Sakkie von Plato, who has been monitoring cranes on the Nyae Nyae pans at Tsumkwe since 1987, and from Mark Paxton, who has been monitoring these birds in Mahango Nature Reserve for 12 years or more, in co-operation with the MET. We hope to be in touch about the further implementation of this priority project in due course, and to send you our crane data collection sheets.