



Namibia is in the throes of one of the worst droughts on record. These extreme conditions have also impacted on the latest Blue Crane breeding season in Etosha: these comparative photographs of Charitsaub – one of our key crane breeding sites – say it all. Above: Charitsaub in wetter years (left January 2014, right April 2016) and below: in 2019 (left March; right June).

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### CRANE CENSUS FOR THE 2018-2019 BREEDING SEASON

With Namibia in the grip of one of the worst droughts on record, provisional rainfall data for the past year/season for Halali amounts to only about 160 mm, and for Okaukuejo 90 mm, compared to a mean of around 400 mm (and maxima of over 600 mm, e.g. in 1953/54, 1975/76 and 2010/11). (No figures are available for Namutoni for the past season at this stage.)

These extreme conditions have taken their toll on the latest Blue Crane breeding season. Most of the breeding sites have dried up considerably (see photos of Charitsaub above, and also of Salvadoria on p4).

*The Namibia Crane Action Plan is supported by the Namibia Nature Foundation and the Ministry of Environment and Tourism and is kindly funded by the Hessische Gesellschaft für Ornithologie und Naturschutz e.V. (HGON), in association with Mathias Stein & Barbara Hudec*  
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<https://www.nnf.org.na/index.php/projects.html#crane-and-raptor-working-groups>





The proximity of water is essential for the survival of the cranes. NCJ (ringed 2014) and an unringed companion at Nebrownii waterhole in February 2019 (photo Valmik Soni).

The availability of water is essential for breeding success, for cooling and for predator evasion. Only three chicks were produced (namely 1 at Twee Palms [27/2/19]; 2 at Chudop [late April]), and none of these have survived.

The Namibia Crane Working Group has conducted a number of ongoing surveys to try and record the rather unpredictable numbers, movements and breeding success of the cranes under these conditions – many thanks to all our dedicated contributors. Our maximum for 2018 now stands at 28; and for 2019 (to date) at 33.

**19-25/11/2018: Hanjo Böhme (gmbhanjo@iway.na) & Dirk Heinrich**

In order to get a full count for the dry season, a thorough survey was done in November 2018. Etosha was very dry and hot. We counted a total of 27 cranes, to which one more bird could be added (NCN, observed on 18/11/18; see report by R Tempel below), bringing the maximum count for 2018 to 28.

We checked Andoni twice (20 & 22/11/18; 21 and 23 Blue Cranes), because we are pretty sure that that is the corridor, where all the cranes come through to reach Etosha before they disperse to different breeding sites inside Etosha. Andoni waterhole was full and thousands of animals congregate there to quench their thirst ... I think all the waterholes are under tremendous pressure, because all the animals need water and some of these holes cannot supply anything.

Date	No. of cranes	Locality	Observer(s)
19-25/11/18	28	All sites	H Böhme & D Heinrich
26/11/18	14	Andoni	Johannes (MET)
9/1/19	14	All sites	G Shatumbu, A & M Scott
21/3/19	33	Andoni	G Shatumbu
28/3-1/4/19	0	All sites	A & M Scott
12/4/19	21	Andoni	G Shatumbu
6-13/4/19	0	All sites	H Böhme & U von Ludwig
10/6/19	11	Andoni	Herman Martin (MET)

The following 8 ringed birds were seen (five older ringed birds and three younger ones):

- NHF (ringed in 2005 at Chudop) & NHH (2006, east of Salvador) – our regular pair already at Charitsaub (19/11/18)
- NHD (2005, east of Rietfontein) & NBN (2007, Salvador) – the Halali Seepage pair, although still at Andoni
- NBZ (2007, Causeway) - reported regularly in Chudop area, seen at Koinachas with an unringed bird (21 & 23/11/18)
- NCJ (2014, Seepage) – has tried to breed at Nebrownii, still at Andoni
- NCK (2014, Salvador) – tried to breed at Newbrownii in 2016, still at Andoni
- NER (2018, Twee Palms – good to see it has survived), at Andoni

We also visited Ivan Kasozi, the General Manager at Mokuti Etosha Lodge, and handed over a bird field guide (a donation from the Namibia Bird Club) and binoculars for one of the tour guides who is interested in birding. The Lodge kindly provided landing facilities for our aerial survey in August 2018 (see Newsletter No. 57).



Ringed adults NHD (ringed 2005) and NBN (2007): the pair from Halali Seepage, still close together while at Andoni (20/11/18) (photo Dirk Heinrich)



Above: Ringed adults NHH (2006) and NHF (2005) at Charitsaub (19/11/18), and below: NBZ (2007) and companion in Chudop area (21/11/18) (photos Dirk Heinrich).

**9/1/19 Gabriel Shatumbu** (gshatumbu@gmail.com),  
**Ann & Mike Scott**

A summary of the crane sightings we obtained during a very thorough survey of all the usual sites on 9/1/19 – thanks again to Gabriel for all the help.

- 08h31 Charitsaub: 0
- 08h35 Salvadora: 0
- 09h00 Rietfontein plains: 4 (1 ringed)
- 09h30 Halali plains: 2 (NCK + unringed)
- 09h45 Halali Seep: 2
- 12h00 Chudop triangle: 2 (NBZ + unringed)
- 13h50 Andoni: 4 (NCJ + 3 unringed)

\*Charitsaub or Salvadora both fairly dry

TOTAL 14



Ringed adult NCK (2014) on the Halali Plains on 9/1/19 (photo Ann Scott).



NBZ (2007) and an unringed companion at Chudop on 9/1/19; note the very limited the water supply – at times supplemented at Koinachas waterhole (photos Ann Scott).



Four cranes were seen at Andoni on 9/1/19: NCJ (2014) and three other unringed adults (photos Ann Scott).

### 21/3/19 Gabriel Shatumbu

Andoni = **33 total**, 8 with green tags but unable to read them. No cranes at any of the other sites.

(ED: This is the highest count since 32 in 2017 and 35 in 2011)

### 18/3/19 Gabriel Shatumbu & Herman Martin (MET)

18.03.2019 (11:30) 11 blue cranes at Andoni waterhole, all adults as per Herman Martin, again he continued: late last month I saw two small chicks with parents at Chudop triangle.

### 28/3/19-1/4/19 Ann & Mike Scott (ecoserve@iway.na)

It seems that the cranes have left. We spent several days looking everywhere for them, but no sign of any cranes, nor chicks. There were none at Andoni, where we had been hoping to see at least some of the eight ringed birds that Gabes found there with his count of 33 on 21/3/19; this would have been a good representation of all/most of the ringed birds that are around (but also see the count of November 2018 above).

The comparative photos of Charitsaub (p1) and Salvadora (right) give an indication of how dry this season has been.

### 6-13/4/19 Hanjo Böhme & Ute von Ludwiger

We really tried hard for the whole week to get crane sightings and travelled those known routes twice (Andoni three times) during the course of the week; but no cranes were seen.

### 12/4/19 Gabriel Shatumbu

21 blue cranes at Andoni area far from waterhole feeding among blue wildebeest; 5 green rings, very far to read.

### 10/6/19 Herman Martin

11 cranes at Andoni.

### PLANS FOR MORE SATELLITE TRACKING

Our key questions remain: what are the reasons for the decline in Blue Crane numbers, where is this happening and how can the causes be addressed?

It is considered that satellite telemetry may still be the best way to reveal the population sink, and that we should continue with our efforts in this regard.

Through our associate Gabriel Shatumbu of the Ministry of Environment and Tourism (MET) at the Etosha Ecological Institute, Dr Paul Howey of Microwave Telemetry (MT) has kindly donated four tags for this purpose: two satellite PTTs and two GSM transmitters. MT has also undertaken to cover the GSM service.

Generous sponsorship (USD 3,000 or N\$45,000) for the Argos tracking services for the above two PTTs (including crane capture) has been provided by the Leiden



Top to bottom: Salvadora in wetter years: January 2011, December 2014, December 2014 (nest); and during the present dry conditions (June 2019) (photos Ann Scott).

Conservation Foundation Project Fund (Tom and Kathy Leiden), facilitated by Kerryn Morrison of the International Crane Foundation/Endangered Wildlife Trust (ICF/EWT) Partnership. It is envisaged that the trackers could provide data for around three years.

The Max Planck Institute for Ornithology in Germany has also made an invaluable donation of ten Lika Uni KN GPS/GSM tags. This process was kindly facilitated by Ortwin Aschenborn and Martin Wikelski – and Gabriel.

All of the above tags are leg-mounted designs.

The MET will also continue to provide support and co-funding in kind, in the way of staff assistance (time, expertise and travelling), and accommodation for the crane tagging. Holger Kolberg has been testing the satellite tags for us.

We are now in the process of planning a capture with a focus on older birds, probably using a mag-lite at night, provided that the cranes continue to visit the Andoni area.

**SPECIAL THANKS TO OUR SPONSORS AND SUPPORTERS**

The Namibia Crane Action Plan is supported by the Namibia Nature Foundation (NNF), in collaboration with the Ministry of Environment and Tourism (MET).



At present our activities are generously funded by the *Hessische Gesellschaft für Ornithologie und Naturschutz e.V.* (HGON) and their associates in Germany, Mathias Stein and Barbara Hudec.

Our sincere thanks are also due to Dr Paul Howey of Microwave Telemetry (MT) for the donation four bags for tracking the cranes; Tom and Kathy Leiden of the Leiden Conservation Foundation Project Fund for funds to cover the satellite tracking costs, facilitated by Kerryn Morrison of the International Crane Foundation/Endangered Wildlife Trust (ICF/EWT) Partnership; and the Max Planck Institute for Ornithology in Germany for their donation of ten Lika Uni KN GPS/GSM tags, through Ortwin Aschenborn and Martin Wikelski; and to Gabriel Shatumbu for facilitating all of these efforts.

Together with Vilho Absalom, the Environmental Educator at the Namutoni Environmental Education Centre (NEEC), we would also like to thank Stephan Gradtke and Steffen Rechholz of Obeco for their wonderful assistance in the form of plumbing materials for the centre in October 2018. This donation was facilitated by Hanjo Böhme, as a token of appreciation to NEEC for providing accommodation for the crane field workers during surveys.

We would also like to thank all our other partners and supporters; in particular the MET Etosha Ecological Institute for ongoing support, including the facilitation of our entry permits for the crane surveys, and the Namutoni Environmental Education Centre for accommodation.

As always, we are indebted to all those who so generously send in their crane observations and the beautiful photographs – thank you very much for your interest.

**MORE CRANE NEWS AND VIEWS**  
**ETOSHA 112 YEARS AND COUNTING**



The Namibia Crane Working Group made a poster presentation on the Namibia Blue Crane Project at the Etosha112 Symposium on 12-14 June 2019.

This poster is now uploaded on the EIS (Environmental Information System, [www.the-eis.com](http://www.the-eis.com), search for "crane poster"). The full reference is: Scott A, Scott M, Altwegg R, Böhme H, Brain C, Gariseb S, Guim S, Kapner J, Kolberg H, Mendelsohn J, Shatumbu G, Simmons R, Versfeld W, Vilho A. 2019. Conservation aspects of the Blue Crane in Namibia. Etosha 112 Symposium, June 2019.

We are busy with some statistical analyses of the data, working with Dr Rob Simmons and Dr Res Altwegg at UCT, and hope to pull all the data together in a publication in due course.

Preliminary statistical analyses indicate that the number of cranes is positively related to rainfall (2006-2018), and that the number of chicks is also positively related to rainfall. There is also a (non-significant) trend for breeding success (fledglings per chick) to increase with rainfall.

**Conservation aspects of the Blue Crane in Namibia**

Ann Scott, Mike Scott, Res Altwegg, Hanjo Böhme, Conrad Brain, Sagesu Gariseb, Sethi Guim, Johannes Kapner, Holger Kolberg, John Mendelsohn, Gabriel Shatumbu, Rob Simmons, Wilfried Versfeld, Absalom Vilho  
Namibia Crane Working Group and partners: University of Cape Town, Namibia Bird Club, Wilderness Society, Ministry of Environment and Tourism (Ministry MET), Research and Information Services of Namibia (RAISON)  
ETOSHA112 SYMPOSIUM – JUNE 2019

**A genetic and conservation puzzle**

The Blue Crane *Anthus trivirgatus* (Schinz 1871) is the most range-restricted of the world's 21 crane species. It occurs mainly in South Africa, with a total population of around 2,000, and is listed as Globally Vulnerable.

A curious and highly isolated breeding population also occurs in Namibia, within the Etosha National Park and on the grasslands to the north. This population is apparently distinct, and the species is regarded as Critically Endangered in this country (Simmons, Brown, Kapner 2013).

Due to concerns about the conservation of cranes, a Namibia Crane Action Plan was compiled and implemented by the Namibia Crane Working Group of the Namibia Nature Foundation in 2006. The Namibia Blue Crane Project was launched in 2006.

**Key questions:**

- How can Blue Cranes remain in Etosha with apparently very little rainfall?
- What is special about these grasslands, and how do the cranes survive in a hot and semi-arid, predator-rich environment such as Etosha?

**Aims to determine:**

- Long term trends in Blue Crane numbers in Namibia, and how these relate to Blue Crane numbers in South Africa.
- Trends in breeding success, and how these relate to rainfall.
- Genetic, habitat use and conservation requirements.
- Limiting factors and threats to continued survival.
- Further proposed research and conservation actions.

**Methods**

- 1 population with 1000 birds in Etosha National Park (ENP) was monitored annually from 2006 to 2018.
- 15 cranes from 1000 birds in Etosha National Park (ENP) were monitored annually from 2006 to 2018.
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**Long term trends in crane numbers in relation to rainfall**

Maximum number of Blue Cranes and crane annual rainfall over the long term (1950 to 2018) (2018)

Blue Crane breeding success in relation to rainfall

Blue Crane breeding success in relation to rainfall (2006 to 2018)

**Crane distribution, habitat use and movements**

Why do the cranes leave the Park?

- Where the Park, cranes are found mainly in the southern part of the Park, and an outlier population in the north.
- Cranes are found in the Park, and an outlier population in the north.
- Cranes are found in the Park, and an outlier population in the north.

**Limiting factors and threats to continued survival**

- Blue Cranes are threatened by loss of habitat and increased competition for space and resources, particularly when the birds have to share the Park with other species, for example, when the number of South African cranes has increased.
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**Conclusions and further proposed actions**

Based on our preliminary findings, we propose the following actions:

- 1. Monitor the population of Blue Cranes in Etosha National Park.
- 2. Monitor the population of Blue Cranes in Etosha National Park.
- 3. Monitor the population of Blue Cranes in Etosha National Park.

**FAREWELL TO HON. LOTTO KUUSHOMWA**

**3/3/1960 - 27/5/2019**

We are sad to bring news of the untimely passing of Hon. Lotto Kuushomwa. Lotto was a founder member of the Namibia Crane Working Group in 2004. He served on the Fifth National Council as Member for the Oshana Region (from 2015); he was the Regional and Information Officer for the Oshana Region; Councillor for Oshakati east; and Chairperson of the Oshana Regional Council and Management, on which he served as a Member for 11 years (<http://www.parliament.na>).

Lotto and his colleagues, including Erastus Kapolo, Samuel Nanguti and Gabriel Uushona (all educators), Gabriel Fillipus, Titus Shivolo and Josef Bonifantius (from a cattle station in the Lake Oponono area and a preacher) joined us in our initial crane workshop and on some of our crane surveys and ringing activities in 2004-2006, and thereafter provided invaluable support for crane conservation amongst their communities north of Etosha. Lotto also translated our crane activity book into Oshiwambo.

We will remember Lotto for his enthusiasm and passion, and for his sincere interest and commitment to our crane conservation activities.



The late Hon. Lotto Kuushomwa assisting with the ringing of Blue Crane chicks at Etosha in April 2006 (photo Wilferd Versfeld).



The late Hon. Lotto Kuushomwa deep in conversation with Dr Chris Brown (centre) and Wilferd Versfeld (left) at the founding of the Namibia Crane Working Group in May 2004 (photo Ann Scott).



The late Hon. Lotto Kuushomwa provided the translation for the Oshiwambo version of our crane activity book, seen here with Mike Scott in April 2006 (photo Ann Scott).



Lotto and colleagues assist Holger and Claire Kolberg with ringing crane chicks in April 2006 (photo Wilferd Versfeld).

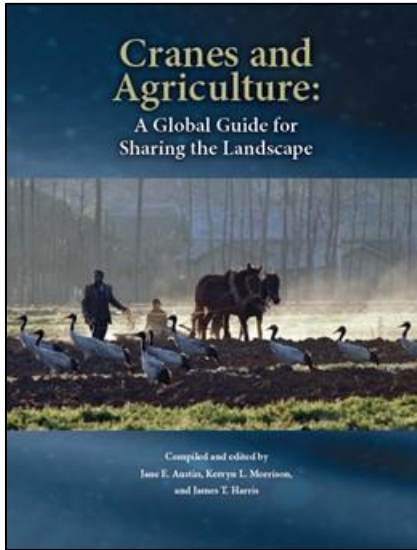


Part of the April 2007 Etosha census team (L to R): Immanuel Kapofi, Liam Erckie, Erastus Kapolo, Nad Brain (pilot), Hon. Lotto Kuushomwa, Samuel Nanguti, Josef Bonifantius and Mike Scott (Photo: Ann Scott)

## CRANES AND AGRICULTURE

A guide for farmers and cranes to live together harmoniously is now available

Kerryn Morrison, Co-Chair of the IUCN Crane Specialist Group ([kerryn@savingcranes.org](mailto:kerryn@savingcranes.org) / [kerrynm@ewt.org.za](mailto:kerrynm@ewt.org.za))



We are excited to finally share with you the completed publication, "Cranes and Agriculture: Sharing the Landscape." The publication was initiated at a Crane Specialist Group workshop in 2010 at Muraviovka Park in Russia, and further developed at a workshop in Beijing in 2012. This product far exceeded our early ideas and will be a great resource for stakeholders across the crane-agriculture interface --- so please share widely!

The publication is available free online at [https://www.savingcranes.org/wp-content/uploads/2018/10/cranes\\_and\\_agriculture\\_web\\_2018.pdf](https://www.savingcranes.org/wp-content/uploads/2018/10/cranes_and_agriculture_web_2018.pdf); and also on [www.the-eis.com](http://www.the-eis.com).

More information about cranes and conservation on an international level is available online at [www.savingcranes.org](http://www.savingcranes.org).

### Cranes and agriculture in Namibia

In Namibia, we are also watching for possible interactions between our cranes and the emergent agricultural irrigation developments that are starting to proliferate in some areas of Namibia (see newsletter No 55, May 2016).

We were keen to see how the images of irrigation development on Google Earth (see top right) translated into reality. In September 2018 we had the opportunity to call in at a few of the irrigation/pivot schemes on the Okavango River, from Rundu eastwards to Divundu. We chatted to some of the staff members and showed them photographs of our cranes; no one had yet seen any cranes there, and attitudes to birds were generally positive. We have asked these staff members to report any sightings of cranes in these areas.



Example of circular/pivot irrigation schemes near Rundu, as depicted on Google Earth (see newsletter No 55, May 2016).

Our concern stems from the fact that in October 2012 a subadult Blue Crane (ringed NAG in April 2011) turned up near Kahenge, some 33 km west of the pivot area in the above Google Earth photo (Nzinze - 17.835629S 18.959114E) (see newsletter No. 50, April 2013). As we know, the cranes move around outside Etosha National Park during the dry months; and this is confirmed by this unusual record. Like the other Blue Cranes in the Overberg, the Eastern Cape and elsewhere in South Africa, our cranes could also be attracted to these relatively limited agricultural areas, especially in dry times. They could try to feed on crops at any stage: seeds, newly germinated plants as well as crops ready for harvest, which could result in potential conflicts.

The Namibia Crane Working Group would like to work together with the authorities and anyone else to try to seek solutions to any conflicts arising from such interactions.



Above and following page: Examples of circular/pivot irrigation schemes on the Okavango River in northern Namibia; these varied agricultural habitats could prove to become attractive to cranes, and other birds (photos Ann Scott).



## CRANE RECORDS AND SIGHTINGS

### PREVIOUS YEARS

**April 2015 Georg Mosdzien** (drechselschorsch@t-online.de)

Today I read a report on the Blue Cranes in the Namibian Forum CH (<https://namibia-forum.ch/know-how/focus.html>), which included your contact address. I have pictures from our Namibia trip April 2015 in the Etosha Park with Blue Cranes. One of the pictures shows a green ring with the inscription NCK; also a picture with chicks.

(ED and confirmed by Wilferd Versfeld: The chick appears to be with the Charitsaub pair [NHF and NHH] – this is the only chick on record for 2015; NCK = ringed 2014)





**17/12/16 Jens Kondratiuk**  
(jens.kondratiuk@googlemail.com)

I just realised how endangered the Blue Cranes are in Namibia. Therefore, I would like to report a sighting of some birds (cannot remember their number). Location was close to Nebrowni in the Etosha NP. Please find two images attached. Hope this helps!



**ADDITIONAL CRANE SIGHTINGS: 2018-2019 BREEDING SEASON**

**15/11/18 "Honeyguiders" Chris Durdin**  
(chris@honeyguide.co.uk), **Tim Hunt and David Bennett**

At Koinachas waterhole near Namutoni on 15/11/18 there were two blue cranes, one which had a turquoise colour ring with the letters NBZ. From what I read online [www.the-eis.com/data/literature/Blue\_Crane.pdf ] this is a routine sighting of a well-known bird.

Both of these sighting were while I was a group from Honeyguide Wildlife Holidays (<http://www.honeyguide.co.uk/wildlife-holidays/Namibia.html>). I would be very pleased if I could report back to group members with information about these birds.

Cranes spark particular interest for two reasons. One is that our guide was Geoff Crane. I don't know if you know him, or know of him: <https://naturalhistorytours.co.za>. Secondly, I am the co-author of a book about common (Eurasian) cranes <http://www.norfolkcranes.co.uk>.

Ed: NBZ = ringed 2008; also see comments regarding this bird and water sources it uses on p3

Photos: Tim Hunt (top); and David Bennett (centre and bottom)



**18/11/18 Rainer Tempel** (rainer.temper@nv-s.de), **Sonja Tausch-Treml** (sonjatt@hotmail.com) & **Holger Kolberg** (Translated freely from the German): In Namibia Forum I read a report of Dirk Heinrich on the Blue Cranes. On 18 November 2018 at 17h10 my wife and I were fortunate to see three Blue Cranes, west of Fischer's pan, about 8 km from Namutoni. One was ringed (**NCN**, see photo), one was unringed, and the third was too far to observe. Photos by my wife, Sonja Tausch-Treml.

[Ed: NCN = ringed in 2016 at Halali Seepage]



**2/12/2018 P Cunningham** (pckkwrc@yahoo.co.uk)

See attached blue crane sightings in Etosha recently (all sightings in the morning).

- Andoni = 14 (foraging in dung between mass of blue wildebeest/springbok/red hartebeest/zebra combination).
- Twee Palms = 2 (foraging close to pool).
- Klein Namutoni = 3 (at edge of pool).

Some with rings but no telescope to confirm much.



**10/12/19 Phil Palmer** (nightjar43@gmail.com)

I found 19 Blue Cranes at Andoni waterhole where there was 1 adult with a green ring and an immature also green ringed. One looked like it read NCR, although being distant, I can't be 100% sure. I could not see rings on other birds, but many were too far away to see the legs well. (See also Wattled Cranes, below.)

I then went to Twee Palms where there were 2 more Blue cranes, so a total of 21 birds that day.

Ed: No NCR, possibly NCK? (2014)

**28-29/12/18 Eckart Demasius (e-b.de@iway.na)**

Blue Crane sightings:

28/12/2018 2 @ Koinachas @ 09h46; group at Andoni (11h20-11h47)

29/12/2018 east of Rietfontein @ 10h32



**20-23/1/19 Susie & Jan van Reep, Barbara Curtis (suzirene@icloud.com)**

20/1/2019: 2 at Andoni

21/1/2019: late afternoon – 2 at Namutoni Camp waterhole

21 & 23/1/19, 17h38: 2 at Twee Palms (possible egg – brooding; confirmed egg 21/1/19 by photo)

23/1/19, 17h45: 7 at Causeway, 1 juv R (photo)



**23-25/1/19 Paul Gascoigne & Helen Pooley (pauldunelark@aol.com)**

We have just travelled through Etosha and saw the following Blue Cranes.

- 23/1/19, 14h45: GPS 1900-181 1622.746. This equates to approximately 1.5 Km before the turn to Halali travelling from Okaukuejo along the main road. Four birds wandering through grass similar to reeds about 200 yards on the right hand side of the road. None of the birds had any kind of rings or tags. Pictures were not obtained as the birds were well hidden in the vegetation.

- 24/1/19, 14h30: Pentad 18.50 1655 on the main road from Namutoni to Halali very close to the turn for Chudop



waterhole. This bird had a ring on its right leg bearing the numbers NBZ [see attached picture, above].

- 25/1/19, 11h00: One bird close to the Twee Palms waterhole. Scoped the bird which was far [wandering through the grass] but could not see any rings.

**11/2/19 T Baas & guests** (okahua@iway.na),

**Ernst Rusch** (earusch@iafrica.com.na)

**Gudrun Middendorff** (gudrunm@iway.na)

Attached please find two pictures seen by Mr T. Baas and his Guests in the vicinity of Nebrownii.



**18/2/19 Valmik Soni** (valmiksoni@gmail.com; +264814535699 Whatsapp)

I am an Indian, keenly interested in wildlife photography. We visit Etosha and other areas very often on photography excursions. We visited Etosha last weekend purely for the purpose of photography.

During the photo shoots I could sight two blue cranes with rings. Hereby attaching the pictures where the rings are visible and readable too. These photos are geo tagged so it would be easy for you to get exact locations. Have few more photos but only these two ringed (also see p2).

We have decided to visit Etosha almost every month with my other photographer friends, will definitely look out for ringed birds.

ED: **NCJ** and an unringed bird were seen at Nebrownii; **NCJ** has been seen there on 11/2/19 (and also at Andoni on 9/1/19). It was ringed as a chick in March 2014 in the area north of Halali. Last year it was seen frequently with a mate in the Nebrownii area, but they did not breed successfully. It was also seen at Andoni on 20 November 2018, and hopefully it will be able to breed successfully this year.

**NCK** (on the Halali Plains and alone) was also ringed as a chick in March 2014, at Salvadoria. It was seen at Springbokfontein on 1/12/18. So far it has not yet bred.



## WATTLED CRANES

27/9/18 Ann & Mike Scott

We were delighted to spot this pair of Wattled Cranes at the water's edge at Mahango (Bwabwata National Park), against a background of papyrus sedge or reeds (*Cyperus papyrus*).



10/12/19 Phil Palmer (nightjar43@gmail.com)

I found 19 Blue Cranes at Andoni waterhole (see above).

The Wattled Crane was also here.

## BLUE CRANES IN SOUTH AFRICA

27/1/19 Kina Joubert (kina@ziyafanaimages.co.za; www.ziyafanaimages.co.za)

Attached please find a few of the images which I took yesterday when we did the Car-count in the Cape Overberg.



9/7/18 Peter Cunningham (pckkwrc@yahoo.co.uk)

Saw 2 x blue cranes at Bitterfontein (in Namaqualand, South Africa) - 2km south of town at farm reservoir; natural veld.

Ed: An apparent range extension of Blue Cranes in Namaqualand, in the Northern Cape in South Africa has been documented by Rob Simmons (Simmons R 2011. Apparent north-west range extension of Blue Cranes in South Africa. Ornithological Observations 2:3-5), with records of five cranes in 2010 (according to the farmer, arriving in 2005 and thought to be breeding), and a pair near Kamieskroon in 2009. These records are also of interest to us due to the proximity of this area to southern Namibia.