

## Banded Gymnogene

*Polyboroides typus*

## Predation

Camperdown District, Natal.  
Observer: E.R. Wolter.

January, 1971.

On the wall of the Nagel Dam in the Camperdown district of Natal, white-throated swallows *Hirundo ulbigularis* and greater striped swallows *Cecropis cucullata* habitually nest. In January, 1971, a banded gymnogene visited a selection of these nests which were indiscriminately placed under an overhanging section and not very close together. The hawk went from nest to nest along the wall face, clinging apparently to the nests themselves, with wings spread, as it removed the young swallows. As it left, when satiated, it was dive-bombed by a fork-tailed drongo *Dicrurus adsimilis*. A keen bird watcher, who spends much time in this area, has since stated that the gymnogene has paid regular January visits to these swallows nests for some years.

## Spotted Eagle Owl

*Bubo africanus*

## Predation

Hluhluwe Game Reserve.  
Observer: B. Robbins.

May, 1971.

While driving through the camp at night a fruit bat *Epomophorus wahlbergi* and a spotted eagle owl (both animals in flight) were picked up in the vehicle's headlights. A moment later the owl caught the bat and settled on the ground with it, where it adjusted its grip on the mammal then flew away with its prey.

## Bronze-wing Courser

*Rhinoptilus chalcopterus*

## Nesting

Umlalazi Nature Reserve.  
Observer: R.E. Webster.

May, 1971.

A nesting bronze-wing courser was found near the Umlalazi River mouth. Two eggs had been laid on the sand. This is the first nesting record of this species for Natal.

## Grey Phalarope

*Phalaropus fulicarius*

## Distribution

Umlalazi Nature Reserve  
Observer: R.E. Webster.

May, 1971.

A storm-wrecked mature grey phalarope was picked up on the beach near Umlalazi River mouth. After looking after the bird for four days it died. This is the first record of this species on the Natal Coast.

## Crowned Eagle

*Polemactus coronatus*

## Mating Behaviour

Kloof, Natal.

Observer: Mrs. Janet Gibson.

January, 1971.

On 15 January, 1971, during the late morning, I heard Crowned Eagles calling, and ran out with my binoculars. Both Eagles were circling and calling, and I noticed a difference in the calls, but louder than the usual "Kheee-wick - Kheee-wiek Kheee-whick" and both birds were doing spectacular aerobatics - circling each other and falling slowly, tail first, touching the mate in mid-air, then climbing steeply to a great height, and hurtling down like a bullet, only checking the descent just before touching the mate in mid-air again.

This display and constant calling - two distinct eagle voices, went on for some time, although I did not time it. Suddenly the female dropped her speed, stopped her call, and flew low over the tops of the krantzes and into a large tree that stands alone on the grassy hillside. She was followed closely, 4 to 6 metres behind, by her mate who sat alongside her on the branch and caressed her crown feathers with his beak. Wasting no time he now covered her; his huge 2m wing-spread flapping the leaves off the tree, and agitating the branches. His long striped tail was clearly visible as it pressed down and under the mate. The procedure in the tree was not prolonged, and after they had both preened for a few minutes both eagles flew off, flying low over the tops of the trees into a far ravine that is hidden from view. One eagle definitely delayed its flight to pick a twig or a few leaves.

## Clinging Bat

*Miniopterus shreibersii*

## Ringing Return

Pietermaritzburg.  
Observer: G. Mackenzie.

August, 1970.

A female clinging bat was captured in a cave in Town Bush Valley, Pietermaritzburg on 1 August, 1970. A ring, number A.03824, was removed. The records of the Transvaal Museum reflect that this bat was banded by Dr. J.S. Pringle of the Natal Museum on 12 August, 1961, in the same cave.

## Square-lipped rhinoceros

*Ceratotherium simum*

## Behaviour

Umfolozi Game Reserve  
Observer: D. Richards.

July, 1971.

Watched a fight between two adult males. The combatant males were in a clearing, at the edge of which stood an adult female and a small calf. Male 1 stood nearest to the female and immature. Whenever

male 2 approached male 1 and female swung round to face male 2. Male 1 was roaring and squealing with ears flattened and pointing backwards. Male 2 had blood flowing freely from two facial wounds. Male 2 made all the advances, with male 1 standing his ground and fighting. On a number of occasions both males stopped fighting and started grazing. Male 1 was observed spray-urinating. Male 2 defaecated and scraped his back with his hind legs. Eventually male 2 succeeded in wounding male 1 on the head. Male 1 continued to stand his ground.

After an hour's observation the males were still fighting when the observer left.

September, 1971.

A confrontation between two adult males (presumed to be territorial) was witnessed. The animals approached each other, with ears pointing forward, horn to horn. At first one male retreated a few metres, then the other did, then they advanced again. The animals continued to retreat and advance for approximately 30 minutes, when they became aware of the observer and fled. No sound was made by either male throughout the encounter. The animals clashed horns a number of times.

September, 1971.

On a number of occasions an adult male and two adult female square-lipped rhinoceros have been seen in the same area.

On one occasion the male was seen attempting to prevent the females from leaving the area. Each time that the females started to move away, the male rounded them up, making a panting sound. The male was also observed spray-urinating. One female appeared to become annoyed with the male and clashed horns.

## Hippopotamus

*Hippopotamus amphibius*

### Behaviour

Ndumu Game Reserve.  
Observer: R. Physick.

July, 1971.

Two herds of hippo were noted about 500 m apart in Nyamithi Pan. A female left herd 1 and swam towards herd 2. Male 1 swam after her and turned her back. Male 2 left his herd and swam out and challenged male 1. The males faced each other, both defaecated, wagged their tails energetically, then swam towards each other with mouths wide open. After clashing, mouth to mouth, a number of times, male 2 backed down. Male 1 turned to return to his herd, but was again challenged by male 2. Male 2 backed down again and Male 1 then challenged two other hippo before returning to his herd.

## Spotted Hyaena

*Crocuta crocuta*

### Behaviour

Hluhluwe Game Reserve  
Observer: B. Kemp.

July, 1971.

Came across an adult hyaena in the Gontshi area at 1630 hours. The animal's progress was followed through binoculars until it entered a fairly dense clump of trees. The area was approached on foot and the hyaena was located again. Two adult hyaena were present, one of which was suckling a very young pup. The group was watched for a period of about thirty minutes. It was just becoming dark when the young animal was escorted into a hole, and the two adult hyaenas left the area.

The group, consisting of two adults and two young, was seen again in the same area on a number of occasions up to the end of September.

## Porcupine

*Hystrix africae-australis*

### Diurnal Behaviour and Feeding

Umfoloji Game Reserve.  
Observer: P. Phelan.

June, 1971.

A group of three animals was seen feeding on the bark of *Thombothis Spirostachys africana* in a forest during the late afternoon. Also recorded feeding on the bark of an uphafa tree *Ziziphus mucronata* by H.R. Dent in Umfolozi Game Reserve.

Hluhluwe Game Reserve.  
Observer: R.M. Murray.

February, 1965.

A porcupine was seen eating the fallen fruits beneath a Marula tree *Sclerocarya caffra*, and two were recorded feeding on the bark of a white Milkwood tree *Sideroxylon inerme*.

Dargle Natal.  
Observer: T.B. Oatley.

November, 1969.

Two animals, about 20m apart, were seen foraging on the floor of a Yellowwood *Podocarpus* forest at 1030 hours. It was not possible to see what the porcupines were actually eating. This was the first sunny day after 48 hours of mist and drizzle.