

Interesting Bird Sightings at Tau, Madikwe

Solitary **Dwarf Bittern** and **Little Bittern** were observed at Tau Lodge Dam (JG:12/00).

A pair of **Red-billed Teal** raised eight ducklings from their nest hidden in long reeds on the north western side of the Tau waterhole (JG:07/00).

Common Moorhen bred in reeds at Tau waterhole where a single youngster was seen hidden among rocks (JG:04/00).

A single male **Montagu's Harrier** was seen on the Madikwe plains (JG&GW:12/00).

Numerous pairs of **Rock Pigeon** breed under the eaves of thatched rooms and the main lodge buildings, with up to three youngsters being produced from each nest (JG:11/00).

A pair of **Giant Eagle Owls** were regularly encountered in the vicinity of Maokeng Dam and were suspected to be breeding nearby (JG:10/00).

A male **Pennant-winged Nightjar** was seen on Pipeline Road in late October and there were further sightings in the vicinity of Tlou Dam, where a female (identifiable by the absence of any white on the wings) was also observed (GW:10/00).

Three active **Yellow-billed Hornbill** nests were found, all being less than one metre from the ground; two nests were in Blue Thorn (*Acacia erubescens*) and contained two nestlings each, a one was in a Leadwood (*Combretum imberbe*) and contained a single chick (JG:11/00). An active **Red-billed Hornbill** nest-hole was found in a Blue Thorn (*Acacia erubescens*) (JG:11/00).

A pair of **Greater Scimitarbill** were found to have a nest-hole in a dead Leadwood (*Combretum imberbe*) in the Tau carpark; the hole was some 5cm in diameter and 3m above the ground. At least two chicks were heard in the nest in November, with both parents provisioning them with insects and larvae. During a one hour observation period the female arrived with food on 6 of 11 occasions (JG:11/00).

Black-chested Prinia raised two young from a nest in a small shrub within the Tau staff village; the pouch-shaped nest was made of woven grass and stems and attached between two stems (JG:04/00).

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Interesting Mammal Sighting at Tau, Madikwe

An **African Wild Cat** was followed for about 500m as it walked down Pipeline Road, it was calling as it ran (JG:08/00).

A pack of seven **Wild Dog** were seen to swim 15m across Tswana Waterhole to reach a drowned **Greater Kudu** cow but were unable to retrieve the carcass (LW:08/00).

A female **White Rhinoceros** with two calves was approached by a male which was anxious to mate; despite his attentions and loud whining, the female avoided him (GH:08/00).

Observers: James Gradwell (JG), Lawrence Weitz (LW), Greg Whelan (GW) and Graham Hopkinson (GH).

Yellow-billed Hornbill are abundant residents of Acacia savanna at Madikwe



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