



K Z N

CRANE FOUNDATION

Newsletter 2 - 2025

Wetlands

Wetlands are crucial for the survival and breeding of two of the three South African crane species. The health of the crane populations is directly linked to the health of wetland ecosystems. Even though some crane species will utilize grasslands, wetlands are still a very important part of their habitat needs.

Wattled Cranes are highly reliant on wetlands for breeding and overall survival, being the most wetland-dependent crane species in Africa. Grey Crowned Cranes are also dependent on wetlands for breeding and foraging.



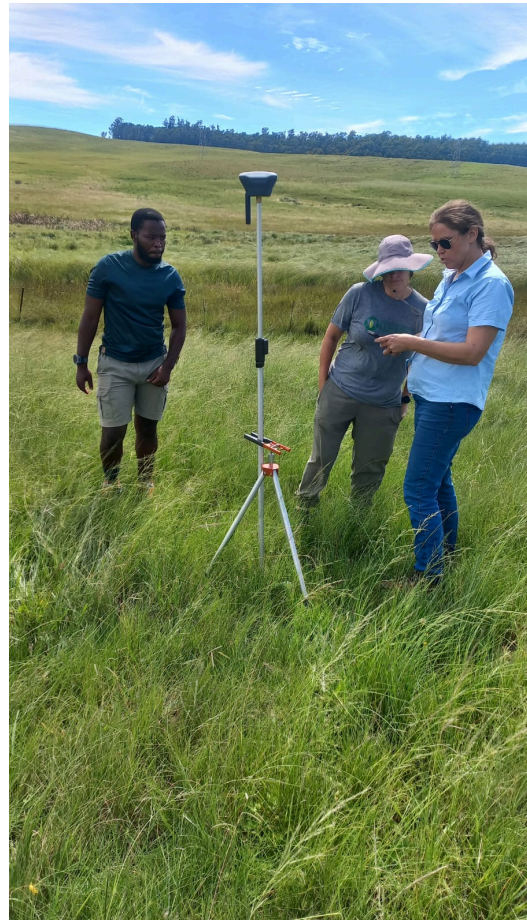
Wetlands: Vital Ecosystems Worth Protecting

Wetlands are dynamic ecosystems that play a crucial role in maintaining environmental health and supporting biodiversity. Some of the ecosystem services which wetlands support are:

- * Water Purification, being natural filters, removing pollutants and excess nutrients from water. This helps to maintain water quality in rivers, lakes, and oceans.
- * Flood Control by functioning as sponges, absorbing excess water during heavy rainfall and releasing it slowly, thus helping to prevent or reduce the severity of floods.
- * Biodiversity Hotspots with providing a habitat for a wide variety of plant and animal species, including the Critically Endangered Wattled Crane in South Africa.
- * Carbon Sequestration. Wetlands store large amounts of carbon, playing a vital role in mitigating climate change.

Unfortunately, wetlands are facing increasing threats from human activities, including drainage, pollution, and development. It's crucial that we recognize the importance of these valuable ecosystems and take steps to protect and restore them.

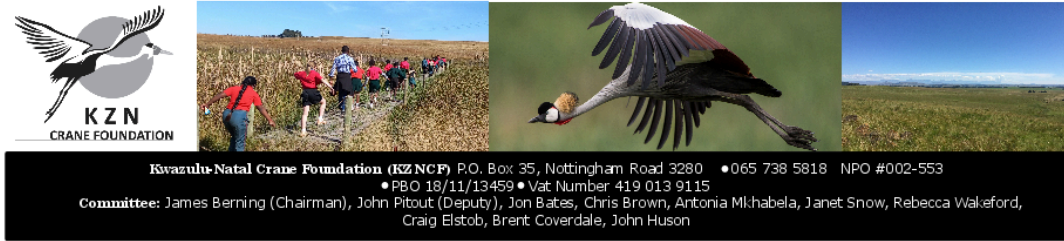
Since the establishment of the BBCONR, the KZN Crane Foundation has followed practices to ensure the wetlands within the reserve are managed appropriately. In February 2025, wetland specialists from Endangered Wildlife Trust and Ezemvelo KZN Wildlife evaluated and created base-line video footage (using drones and geolocations) of the wetland systems on the Nature Reserve. Advice on upgrading our management processes (in line with current scientific research) was supplied. The baseline footage will indicate the changes which will occur due to the alterations in the management systems.



Watch this space...

KZNCF is currently organizing a Veld Management Day for beef and dairy farmers. Facilitators will include representatives from University of KZN (Prof Kevin Kirkman, Dr Sindiso Nkuna), Department of Agric (Cobus Botha), John Pitout (local farmer) and Emma Niland (Intelact).

If you would like to join our membership or find out more about what we do at the KZNCF, follow the link: <https://kzncranefoundation.org.za/get-involved/become-a-memb...> or contact Sue on admin@kzncranefoundation.org.za



KZN Crane Foundation

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