



KZN

CRANE FOUNDATION

Newsletter 8/2025

Cranes, Conservation and a Call to Care

This month, we celebrate Brent Coverdale receiving the Eagle Owl Award. Brent's conservation journey began right here with the KZN Crane Foundation. From those early days in 2000, working with landowners and communities to protect our elegant cranes, this passion grew into a lifelong commitment to birds and their habitats. What started with cranes has expanded in his role in Ezemvelo KZN Wildlife to vultures, swallows, and many other threatened species. His message remains the same: protecting nature sustains both wildlife and people. Brent is a vital, long standing member of our Committee, he represents KZN Ezemvelo Wildlife and stands as our Environmental Advisor to the KZNCF.



A Journey Rooted in Cranes

For me, conservation began with cranes. Back in 2000, I started my career with the Crane Foundation, and looking back, it feels deeply fitting to now receive recognition that traces all the way back to where my love for birds truly took flight. Those first five and a half years were spent learning the value of community engagement—working alongside landowners, sharing knowledge, and realising just how vital people are in protecting species.

Cranes were my first love, and they remain close to my heart even though today much of my work focuses on vultures, swallows, and other threatened birds. There is something undeniably elegant about cranes—the way they move, the spaces they inhabit. To me, conserving them has always felt natural, because in saving cranes we also safeguard wetlands, grasslands, and the countless other species that call these places home.

That early beginning opened a pathway to a lifelong career in bird conservation. Today, I see our task as twofold: not only protecting species, but also inspiring the next generation of

conservationists. Future adults must grow up understanding why cranes, grasslands, and wetlands matter—not just for biodiversity, but also for human well-being.

While my days are now filled with projects on Bearded Vultures, Blue Swallows, White-winged Flufftails and others, I still find ways to stay connected with cranes. And whether I'm in forests, wetlands, grasslands, or mountains, I feel grateful for the extraordinary avian diversity we are blessed with here in KwaZulu-Natal.

However, birdwatching is never just about ticking species off a list. It's about understanding where birds fit into the ecosystem and recognising that every species counts—even the hardy ibis. As the saying goes, "we need to keep the common things common," while also safeguarding threatened species that so often signal the health of our environment.

At the heart of it all, birds remind us that spending time in nature is vital for our own health too. Protected areas like the Bill Barnes Crane and Oribi Nature Reserve give us more than conservation—they offer peace, perspective, and a place to breathe. In a world where we spend too much time indoors and behind screens, nature provides the remedy: sunlight, fresh air, and a renewed sense of connection.

So, if there is one message I would leave with readers, it is this: step outside. Soak up the beauty of creation. Care for your mental well-being, and in turn, let that positivity fuel the conservation action we so urgently need.

By Brent Coverdale



The Eagle Owl Award, is awarded for outstanding long term contributions to bird conservation in South Africa. Recipients are honoured for their exceptional and sustained commitment and impact to bird conservation. Nominees should have made a significant and measurable contribution to the conservation of South Africa's birds and/or their habitats. The KZNCF congratulates our committee member, Brent Coverdale on being a recipient of this award.

One of the motivations for Brent to receive the award was:

‘Brent’s input into the Bearded Vulture Recovery Programme, as well as the Breeding Programme, has been invaluable as chair and committee member.’
Dr Sonja Krueger, EKZNW


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Get Summer Fit!



It's our very 1st Fun Run!!

 In partnership with Sportstec, Spar, and Nottingham Road Primary School, this special family event kicks off at Nottingham Road Primary and takes you through the breathtaking trails of the Bill Barnes Crane & Oribi Reserve.

 Start your morning with a walk or run, then stay on for a fun-filled family day! Kids can enjoy jumping castles, while the grown-ups relax with live music and mouth-watering food stalls.

 Bring your running shoes, bring your family, and join us for a day of fun, fitness, and community spirit!

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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. Follow us on Facebook <https://www.facebook.com/kzncranef/> and Instagram https://www.instagram.com/kzn_cf/ to see what happens during the month.



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KZN Crane Foundation

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