



Biodiversity Observations

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GREEN WOOD-HOOPOE *PHOENICULUS PURPUREUS* OBSERVED DRINKING

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GREEN WOOD-HOOPOE *PHOENICULUS PURPUREUS* OBSERVED DRINKING

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Green Wood-hoopoes are regular visitors to our garden in Raptor's View Wildlife Estate in Hoedspruit, Limpopo Province. They have never made use of the birdbath until one bird went down to drink on 18 April 2014 at 10h10 in the morning. The bird spent approximately 15 seconds at the birdbath, regularly dipping its bill into the water for several seconds and then lifting its head allowing water to trickle down the bill towards the throat as can be seen in Fig 2. This is the first time I have observed any member of the hoopoe families drinking in this manner.

Fig 1. Green Wood-hoopoe collecting water at the birdbath.

Fig 2. Droplets of water visible in the bill of the Wood-hoopoe just before swallowing.

Editor's note:

The Hoopoe *Upupa epops* (family Upupidae) does not drink water (Handbook of Birds of Africa 3:373, 1988), or "seldom, if ever, drinks" (Handbook of Birds of the World 6, 2001). I have not found mention of drinking, or not, in the wood-hoopoes and scimitar-bills (family Phoeniculidae) in any standard texts. So it is great to have Derek's observation published, which may be a first record.

