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An electronic journal published by the Animal Demography Unit at the University of Cape Town

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Recommended citation format:

Oschadleus HD, 2016. Biodiversity survey at the Hans Hoheisen Wildlife Research Station, Orpen Gate. Biodiversity Observations 7.30: 1–12

URL: http://bo.adu.org.za/content.php?id=223

Published online: 25 June 2016



BIODIVERSITY SURVEY

BIODIVERSITY SURVEY AT THE HANS HOHEISEN WILDLIFE RESEARCH STATION, ORPEN GATE

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Introduction

The Animal Demography Unit (ADU) held a biodiversity survey at Hans Hoheisen Wildlife Research Station over the weekend of 27–30 November 2015, with 30 delegates (Figure 1). There was bird ringing, bird atlasing and collection of Virtual Museum (VM) records. This paper reports on the taxa identified from ringing and Virtual Museum records on the weekend, as well as records reported prior to the weekend.

Study site

The Hans Hoheisen Wildlife Research Station (HHWRS, 24° 28' 55.60"S, 31° 23' 09.40"E) is situated next to the Orpen Gate of the Kruger National Park in South Africa, and officially opened on 25 August 2010. HHWRS is a research and training station managed by the University of Pretoria (UP) as part of a collaborative agreement with the Peace Parks Foundation and Mpumalanga Tourism and Parks Agency. HHWRS facilities include accommodation, multiple laboratories, library, wildlife housing and handling facilities as well as office space for researchers from UP as well as other institutions. The Station also has facilities suited for meetings and the presentation of courses, including a large auditorium.

The Draft Environmental Impact Report for the upgrade of the HHWRS (van der Westhuizen 2013) noted the following information about the flora and fauna of the site. The veld type was considered to be Mixed Lowveld Bushveld, or Arid Lowveld, and was described as dense bush on the uplands, open tree savanna in the bottom lands, and dense riverine woodland on the riverbanks and drainages. A long list of flora was provided. The report listed the number of animals for the Kruger National Park but had no list of fauna on the HHWRS property itself. The report noted that the boundary fence excluded large mammals but not small mammal species such as bats and rodents. The report listed only the following species from HHWRS: Southern African python *Python natalensis*, plated lizards *Gerrhosaurus* spp., two baboon spiders (*Augacephalus breyeri* and *Augacephalus junodi*), and Transvaal thick-tailed scorpion *Parabuthus transvaalicus*.

The present report details a list of confirmed species for HHWRS from the weekend, and also prior to the weekend, based on records submitted to ADU projects.

Methods

Mist nets were put up on Saturday and Sunday (28–29 November) by several bird ringers. Moth traps were set up at night to attract moths and other insects. A few *Charaxes* traps were baited and put out on Sunday. Other taxa were searched for by walking around singly or in groups, mostly during the day but also at night.

The records were extracted on 22 February 2016 from two of the digital biodiversity databases held at the ADU, collected largely by citizen scientists. These were the database of the South African Bird Ringing Unit (SAFRING), and the database of the ADU Virtual Museum (http://vmus.adu.org.za). The taxa/projects are listed in Table 1.



Results

74 birds were ringed during the weekend, and eight recaptured (Table 1, Appendix 2). Five of the recaptures were from the weekend itself, and three were birds from up to one year earlier. Kurrichane Thrush (ring CA31703) was ringed two months previously; an African Paradise-flycatcher (ring AR54250) and Southern Black Tit (ring FB69979) had both been ringed 11.5 months earlier. Including birds ringed before the weekend, and a few after, the ringing total at HHWRS increased to 236 birds, including several raptors.

The ADU Virtual Museum (http://vmus.adu.org.za) has 17 sections and records from HHWRS have been submitted for all except EchinoMAP (which is by definition only coastal) and FishMAP (which is possible in the adjacent Timbavati River). Over 500 records have been submitted (Table 1), with nearly half identified to species, or some higher level (Appendix 2). The moth component of LepiMAP contains the bulk of the unidentified records

Birdpix records totalled 22 species overall, and 17 during the weePend. PHOWN added one taxon not recorded by any other method, the Red-billed Buffalo-Weaver, as a nest was still present, although the birds were not (but they were observed at the nearby Southern African Wildlife College).

SABAP2 records have not been included in this report because the pentad spatial scale (9×10 km) for this project includes an area substantially larger than HHWRS. Atlasers visited the Kruger National Park to include species on bird atlas checklists. More than 110 bird species were atlased for the Orpen pentad 2425_3120 over the weekend (Williams 2016). The SABAP2 database contained 94 full protocol pentads for this pentad, listing 268 species (see http://sabap2.adu.org.za/pentad_info.php?group=&qdgc=&iba=&area=&pentad=2425_3120§ion=species_rr#pent_info_tabs).

Table 1. Number of records obtained at the Hans Hoheisen Wildlife Research Station per section of the ADU Virtual Museum project, showing totals submitted and identified, both for records and for the ADU weekend alone. Bird species totals including ringing are also shown.

VM project	Records	overall	all 27–30 November 2	
	Submitted	Identified	Submitted	Identified
BirdPix	22	21	17	17
BOP	2	2		
DungBeetleMAP	13	1	13	1
EchinoMAP	0	0		
FishMAP	0	0		
FrogMAP	4	4		
LacewingMAP	11	10	9	8
LepiMAP	266	96	57	26
MammalMAP	22	21	9	8
MushroomMAP	5	0	5	0
OdonataMAP	2	2		
OrchidMAP	1	0	1	0
PHOWN	5	5	4	4
ReptileMAP	59	57	10	8
ScorpionMAP	6	6	2	2
SpiderMAP	58	8	17	3
TreeMAP	28	5	20	4
Total	504	238	164	81
Birds [incl Ringed]		68		41
Taxa totals		285		105



Discussion

The conference event, and visits leading up to the conference, contributed a large number of species records that were not available for the EIA report (van der Westhuizen 2013).

A total of over 500 Virtual Museum records of fauna and flora have been submitted to 15 of the 17 sections of the ADU Virtual Museum and 164 of these records were collected during the weekend of the Citizen Science Conference of November 2015. 238 taxa have been identified by expert panels of the Virtual Museum, and the total list of identified species stands at 285 (Appendices 1 and 2).

There are 236 bird ringing records for the site of 58 species. The total bird species list for the site, using ringing records and the VM projects Birdpix and PHOWN, makes 68 species.

The most diverse group was the Lepidoptera with 96 species identified; the moths may be identified in the future but no moth list was available at the time of analysis. This is followed by the birds with 68 species, and reptiles with 57 species identified.

Acknowledgements

SAFRING is sponsored by the South African National Biodiversity Institute, and the Namibian Ministry of Wildlife and Tourism. The University of Cape Town provides accommodation and services.

Thanks to all the citizen scientists who participated in the conference at HHWRS and who have contributed biodiversity records for HHWRS.

Especial thanks to the Professor Darrell Abernethy and the HHWRS staff for hosting the event, and to Zephné Bernitz for organising the logistics.

References

Van der Westhuizen M 2013. Proposed upgrade of the Hans Hoheisen Wildlife Research Station, Mpumalanga. Draft Environmental Impact Report (online at http://www.nuleafsa.co.za/wp-content/uploads/2012/12/EIR-HHWRS-July-2013_final_5.pdf)

Williams D 2016. ADU week-end at Hans Hoheisen. Hornbill 120:27.



Figure 1. Delegates who attended the survey weekend at the Hans Hoheisen Wildlife Research Station, Orpen Gate..



Appendix 1. List of bird species recorded at Hans Hoheisen Wildlife Research Station from ringing and BirdPix, showing both all records and those recorded during the Conference weekend, 27–30 November 2015.

Sp. No.	Species name	Latin	Ringed & retrapped, 2015	Ringed November 2015	Retraps November 2015	Birdpix, 2012–2015	Birdpix November 2015
107	White-backed Vulture	Gyps africanus	1	2015	2013	2012 2013	2013
110	Hooded Vulture	Necrosyrtes monachus	_			У	У
137	Wahlberg's Eagle	Aquila wahlbergi	1			,	,
158	Little Sparrowhawk	Accipiter minullus	1				
183	Natal Spurfowl	, Pternistis natalensis				y	
227	Black-bellied Bustard	Lissotis melanogaster				y	У
244	Senegal Lapwing	Vanellus lugubris				У	·
316	Cape Turtle Dove	Streptopelia capicola	1				
321	Emerald-spotted Wood-Dove	Turtur chalcospilos	10	4			
328	Brown-headed Parrot	Poicephalus cryptoxanthus				у	у
365	Pearl-spotted Owl	Glaucidium perlatum	1				
369	Verreaux's Eagle-Owl	Bubo lacteus				У	
392	Red-faced Mousebird	Urocolius indicus	3				
399	Woodland Kingfisher	Halcyon senegalensis	3				
407	Southern Carmine Bee-eater	Merops nubicoides				У	
412	European Roller	Coracias garrulus				У	
439	Crested Barbet	Trachyphonus vaillantii	1				
440	Greater Honeyguide	Indicator indicator	2	1			
442	Lesser Honeyguide	Indicator minor	4	2			
447	Golden-tailed Woodpecker	Campethera abingoni	1				
503	Lesser Striped Swallow	Hirundo abyssinica	2			У	У
521	Black-headed Oriole	Oriolus larvatus	1				
522	Pied Crow	Corvus albus	1	1		У	У
527	Southern Black Tit	Parus niger	8	3	1	У	У



			Ringed &				
			retrapped,	Ringed	Retraps	Birdpix,	Birdpix Nov
Sp. No.	Species name	Latin	2015	Nov 2015	Nov 2015	2014-2015	2015
533	Arrow-marked Babbler	Turdoides jardineii	5				
545	Dark-capped Bulbul	Pycnonotus barbatus	4	2			
551	Sombre Bulbul	Andropadus importunus	2				
552	Kurrichane Thrush	Turdus libonyana	6	0	1		
582	White-throated Robin	Cossypha humeralis	1				
588	White-browed Robin	Erythropygia leucophrys	11	6			
595	Garden Warbler	Sylvia borin	3	1		У	У
599	Willow Warbler	Phylloscopus trochilus	3	1			
615	Stierling's Barred Warbler	Calamonastes stierlingi	2	1		У	У
621	Long-billed Crombec	Sylvietta rufescens	25	9	2		
625	Yellow-breasted Apalis	Apalis flavida	4	1			
627	Bleating Warbler	Camaroptera brachyura	3	1			
642	Rattling Cisticola	Cisticola chiniana	1				
654	Spotted Flycatcher	Muscicapa striata	2	1			
657	Fantailed Flycatcher	Myioparus plumbeus	2	1			
673	Chinspot Batis	Batis molitor	15	5	2	У	У
682	African Paradise Flycatcher	Terpsiphone viridis	7	2	1		
708	Red-backed Shrike	Lanius collurio	4	1		У	У
712	Black-backed Puffback	Dryoscopus cubla	12	5			
714	Three-streaked Tchagra	Tchagra australis	7	3			
715	Black-crowned Tchagra	Tchagra senegala	1				
719	Orange-breasted Bush Shrike	Telophorus sulfureopectus	4	2			
721	Gorgeous Bush Shrike	Telophorus quadricolor	1	1			
723	Grey-headed Bush Shrike	Malaconotus blanchoti	1				
738	Greater Blue-eared Starling	Lamprotornis chalybaeus	2	1			



			Ringed & retrapped,	Ringed	Retraps	Birdpix,	Birdpix Nov
Sp. No.	Species name	Latin	2015	Nov 2015	Nov 2015	2014-2015	2015
743	Burchell's Starling	Lamprotornis australis	2				
748	Red-billed Oxpecker	Buphagus erythrorhynchus				У	У
755	Marico Sunbird	Nectarinia mariquensis	5				
756	Purple-banded Sunbird	Nectarinia bifasciata	7	4			
763	White-bellied Sunbird	Nectarinia talatala	14	3			
771	Collared Sunbird	Anthreptes collaris	1				
779	Red-billed Buffalo-Weaver	Bubalornis niger				PHOWN	PHOWN
791	Spectacled Weaver	Ploceus ocularis	4	1	1	У	У
793	Red-headed Weaver	Anaplectes rubriceps	2	1		У	У
803	Southern Masked Weaver	Ploceus velatus	2	1		У	У
830	Green-winged Pytilia	Pytilia melba	3				
835	Jameson's Firefinch	Lagonosticta rhodopareia	3				
837	Red-billed Firefinch	Lagonosticta senegala	2	1			
839	Blue Waxbill	Uraeginthus angolensis	9	1		У	У
846	Pintailed Whydah	Vidua macroura	2	1		У	У
859	Yellow-eyed Canary	Serinus mozambicus	7	4			
874	Golden-breasted Bunting	Emberiza flaviventris	2	1			
4129	Red-billed Hornbill	Tockus erythrorhynchus				У	У
4142	Southern Greyheaded Sparrow	Passer diffusus	2	1			
	Totals		236	74	8		



Appendix 2. List of taxa (other than birds) recorded and identified at Hans Hoheisen Wildlife Research Station from the ADU Virtual Museum, 1984–2016, listing all records (those noted during the Conference weekend are marked as "y" in the column November 2015).

Species number Dung Beetles	Common name	Scientific name	November 2015
7710170		Scarabaeus nigroaeneus	У
Lacewings			
328780		Nemoleon sp.	У
327840		Cueta sp.	У
327800		Creoleon nubifer	У
326160		FAMILY Mantispidae	У
328520		Maula stigmatus	У
329580		Palpares torridus	У
Odonata			
669120	Orange-winged Dropwing	Trithemis kirbyi	
668640		Trithemis sp.	
Lepidoptera			
469230	Ragged skipper	Caprona pillaana	
408530	Spotted joker	Byblia ilithyia	
407590	African common white	Belenois creona severina	
407450	Brown-veined white	Belenois aurota	
458810	Eastern scarlet	Axiocerses tjoane tjoane	
458500	Bush scarlet	Axiocerses amanga amanga	
460430	Black striped hairtail	Anthene amarah amarah	
410760	Wandering donkey acraea	Acraea neobule neobule	
411820	Natal acraea	Acraea natalica	



Species no.	Common name	Scientific name	Nov 2015
410360	Acara acraea	Acraea acara acara	
403120	African migrant	Catopsilia florella	
435200	White-barred charaxes	Charaxes brutus natalensis	
435270	Giant charaxes	Charaxes castor flavifasciatus	
433620	Pearl-spotted charaxes	Charaxes jahlusa rex	
434010	Demon charaxes	Charaxes phaeus	
466030	Grass jewel	Chilades trochylus	
468380	Two-pip policeman	Coeliades pisistratus	
419510	Zulu shadefly	Coenyra hebe	
404180	Smoky orange tip	Colotis euippe omphale	
404760	Veined tip	Colotis vesta argillaceus	
409280	African monarch, Plain tiger	Danaus chrysippus orientis	
402930	Broad-bordered grass yellow	Eurema brigitta brigitta	
408790	Golden piper	Eurytela dryope angulata	
439300	Common diadem	Hypolimnas misippus	
438340	Blue pansy	Junonia oenone oenone	
472900	Pale ranger	Kedestes callicles	
440210	Common woolly legs	Lachnocnema bibulus	
463230	Pea blue	Lampides boeticus	
464050	Common zebra blue	Leptotes pirithous pirithous	
469270	White-cloaked skipper	Leucochitonea levubu	
415130	Twilight Brown	Melanitis leda	
405670	Common dotted border	Mylothris agathina agathina	
400530	Citrus swallowtail	Papilio demodocus demodocus	
419560	Dark-webbed ringlet	Physcaeneura panda	
403570	Zebra white	Pinacopteryx eriphia eriphia	
409060	Natal tree-nymph	Sevenia natalensis	
464330	Black pie	Tuxentius melaena melaena	
438050	Painted lady	Vanessa cardui	



Species no.	Common name	Scientific name	Nov 2015
464560	Hintza pierrot	Zintha hintza hintza	
475590	Palm-tree night-fighter	Zophopetes dysmephila	
551040		Omizodes rubrifasciata	
408500	Joker	Byblia anvatara acheloia	
465310	Common smoky blue	Euchrysops malathana	
472120	Common hottentot	Gegenes niso niso	
464720	Tiny grass blue	Zizula hylax	
529270		Sphingomorpha chlorea	
464800	Topaz babul blue	Azanus jesous	
404550	Bushveld orange tip	Colotis pallene	
463950		Leptotes sp.	
458480		Axiocerses sp.	
403740	Scarlet tip	Colotis annae annae	у
530470		Arniocera auriguttata	у
403720		Colotis sp.	у
411830	Window Acraea	Acraea oncaea	у
404320	Orange tip	Colotis evenina evenina	у
522710		Cyligramma latona	у
466520	Silvery blue	Lepidochrysops glauca	у
467330	Twin-spot blue	Lepidochrysops plebeia plebeia	у
625990		Acherontia atropos	у
626920		Hippotion balsaminae	у
628350		Pseudoclanis postica	у
517380		Spilosoma lineatum	у
404690	Queen purple tip	Colotis regina	у
436040	Foxy charaxes	Charaxes jasius saturnus	у
432530	Bushveld charaxes	Charaxes achaemenes achaemenes	у
437080	Pearl charaxes	Charaxes varanes varanes	у

Nov 2015

y y



Species no.	Common name	Scientific name
438280	Yellow pansy	Junonia hierta cebrene
432240	Guinea-fowl butterfly (Figure 2)	Hamanumida daedalus
_		
Frogs		-1
760	Banded Rubber Frog	Phrynomantis bifasciatus
470	Southern Foam Nest Frog	Chiromantis xerampelina
590	Painted Reed Frog	Hyperolius marmoratus
Reptiles		
1570	Southern Tree Agama	Acanthocercus atricollis atricollis
5410	Puff Adder	Bitis arietans arietans
5380	Snouted Night Adder	Causus defilippii
4690	Boomslang	Dispholidus typus typus
4400	Cape Wolf Snake	Lycophidion capense capense
5000	East African Shovel-snout	Prosymna stuhlmannii
3880	Schlegel's Beaked Blind Snake	Afrotyphlops schlegelii
5630	Natal Hinged Tortoise	Kinixys natalensis
5360	Black Mamba	Dendroaspis polylepis
5270	Snouted Cobra	Naja annulifera
5300	Mozambique Spitting Cobra	Naja mossambica
4070	Southern African Python	Python natalensis
1220	Rock Monitor	Varanus albigularis albigularis
4970	Striped Grass Snake	Psammophylax tritaeniatus
4900	Olive Grass Snake	Psammophis mossambicus
4640	Spotted Bush Snake	Philothamnus semivariegatus
4930	Western Yellow-bellied Sand Snake	Psammophis subtaeniatus
4570	Marbled Tree Snake	Dipsadoboa aulica
580	Turner's Gecko	Chondrodactylus turneri
5540	Leopard Tortoise	Stigmochelys pardalis



Species no.	Common name	Scientific name	Nov 2015
2430	Striped Skink	Trachylepis striata	
2480	Variable Skink	Trachylepis varia	У
320	Common Dwarf Gecko	Lygodactylus capensis capensis	У
1410	Common Flap-neck Chameleon	Chamaeleo dilepis dilepis	У
3550	Common Giant Plated Lizard	Matobosaurus validus (Figure 3)	У
230	Common Tropical House Gecko	Hemidactylus mabouia	У
6			
Scorpions		Hadaaaa ka aladutaa	
303850		Hadogenes troglodytes	
302800		Parabuthus transvaalicus	
304080		Opisthacanthus asper (Figure 4)	
303250		Uroplectes chubbi	
304500		Opistophthalmus glabrifrons	У
Spiders			
700240		Ceratogyrus darlingi	
700150		Augacephalus junodi	
700070	Unidentified Idiopidae	FAMILY Idiopidae	
700110	Unidentified Theraphosidae	FAMILY Theraphosidae	у
700640		Idiothele nigrofulva	У
Mammals			
110080	Moholi Bushbaby	Galago moholi	
198960	African wild dog	_	
191540	Ground Pangolin	Lycaon pictus Smutsia temminckii	
217920	•		
175880	Vervet Monkey Mauritian Tomb Bat	Chlorocebus pygerythrus pygerythrus	
		Taphozous (Taphozous) mauritianus	
110190	Brown Greater Galago	Otolemur crassicaudatus	



Species no.	Common name	Scientific name	Nov 2015
197810	Side-striped Jackal	Canis adustus	
196670	Common Dwarf Mongoose	Helogale parvula	
207390	White Rhinoceros	Ceratotherium simum	
158240	Scrub Hare	Lepus (- [see comments under species]) saxatilis	
207010	Plains Zebra	Equus quagga	
216040	Waterbuck	Kobus ellipsiprymnus	У
211850	Impala	Aepyceros melampus	у
197450	Banded Mongoose	Mungos mungo	У
123710	Smith's Bush Squirrel	Paraxerus cepapi	У
107520	African Bush Elephant	Loxodonta africana	У
Trees			
20699	Sickle-bush	Dichrostachys cinerea	У
19690	Fever-tree Acacia	Acacia xanthophloea	У
10659	Marula	Sclerocarya birrea	У



Figure 2. Guinea-fowl butterfly, LepiMAP 583564 (HD Oschadleus)



Figure 3 Common Giant Plated Lizard, ReptileMAP 155737 (HD Oschadleus)



Figure 4. *Opistophthalmus glabrifrons* ScorpionMAP 1136 (HD Oschadleus)