



# BIRDS OF THE BREEDE ESTUARY

## Beginner's Observation Guide

[info@breede-river.org](mailto:info@breede-river.org)  
028 537 1926 / 064 774 3862



© Carin Malan

## Sandwich Tern

*Thalasseus sandvicensis*

Rarely found inland, or out to sea, Sandwich Terns inhabit coastlines and estuaries where they congregate in large numbers and hunt small schooling fish.



Common



Seen



Photo

Tick if you've seen  
or photographed  
the birds!



© Anton Odendal

## Caspian Tern

*Hydroprogne caspia*

The largest of all terns, the Caspian Tern is crow-sized. Its bill is coral red with a dusky tip. Caspian Terns tend to fly slowly over the water, and then dive swiftly to catch prey.



Uncommon



Seen



Photo



Look out for  
uncommon and  
rare birds.



© Charles Naudé

## African Black Oystercatcher

*Haematopus moquini*

The African Black Oystercatcher has been down-listed from Near Threatened to Least Concern on the IUCN Red List of Threatened Species (2021).



Uncommon



Seen



Photo



© Carin Malan

## White-fronted Plover

*Charadrius marginatus*

White-fronted Plovers are common inhabitants of sandy shores, dunes and mudflats. These birds can live up to 11 years.



Common



Seen



Photo



© Anton Odendal

## Common Greenshank

*Tringa nebularia*

Often confused with the Marsh Sandpiper, Common Greenshanks are stockier birds and have a slightly upturned bill.



Common



Seen



Photo



© Anton Odendal

## Common Whimbrel

*Numerius phaeopus*

Whimbrels are migratory birds that breed in the Northern Hemisphere. From August to April these birds can be found along our coastline as well as in estuaries such as the Breede with sand and rocky intertidal habitats, including salt marshes.



Common



Seen



Photo



© Anton Odenal

## African Darter

*Anhinga rufa*

A waterbird that often swims with its body submerged and only its S-shaped neck protruding from the water. Darters open their wings on land to dry their feathers and warm up faster.



Common



Seen



Photo



© Jacques Smit

## Common Moorhen

*Gallinula chloropus*

Common Moorhens have an almost worldwide distribution. At the Breede River you may see this bird inhabiting freshwater reeds.



Uncommon



Seen



Photo



© Tertius Josephs

## African Spoonbill

*Platalea alba*

African Spoonbills use their spoon-shaped bills to catch food by swinging it from side-to-side in the water.



Uncommon



Seen



Photo



© Anton Odenal

## Grey Heron

*Ardea cinerea*

Standing one metre tall, Grey Herons are known for their ability to stand motionless for long periods of time while hunting fish and other small estuarine creatures.



Common



Seen



Photo



© Jacques Smit

## Denham's Bustard

*Neotis denhami*

These large birds can stand up to one metre tall. They have prominent white necks and chests, which male Bustards puff out when seeking a mate. Denham's Bustards enjoy grasslands and shrubland, as well as farmland.



Rare



Seen



Photo



© Jason Oxley

## Southern Black Korhaan

*Afrotis afra*

The Southern Black Korhaan prefers Renosterveld scrub and semi-arid Karoo habitats, but they make use of farmland when there is no natural vegetation. These birds are mostly impacted by a loss of habitat. A decrease in cover means eggs and chicks are more vulnerable to predators.



Rare



Seen



Photo





© Bob Zylstra

## African Fish Eagle

*Haliaeetus vocifer*

African Fish Eagles form a conspicuous part of the Breede Estuary. Their call is so well known that it is often referred to as 'the voice of Africa'.



Common



Seen



Photo



© Jacque Smit

## Black Harrier

*Circus maurus*

Black Harriers are Southern Africa's rarest endemic bird of prey. There are thought to be less than 1000 breeding birds left. This species is highly dependent on Renosterveld which is rapidly diminishing.



Rare



Seen



Photo



© Jason Oxley

## Cape Vulture

*Gyps coprotheres*

The Cape Vulture is the only vulture to inhabit the Western Cape. These birds are considered vulnerable, however the De Hoop population is one of the few that are increasing in numbers.



Uncommon



Seen



Photo



© Anton Odendaal

## Pied Kingfisher

*Ceryle rudis*

A boldly marked black-and-white kingfisher that is often seen in pairs or groups. The Pied Kingfisher is the only kingfisher that hovers before it dives into the water.



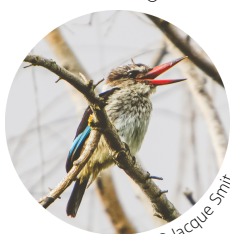
Common



Seen



Photo



© Jacque Smit

## Brown-hooded Kingfisher

*Halcyon albiventris*

This kingfisher has a specially adapted bill which helps it hunt fish, crabs and other aquatic invertebrates. Insects such as butterflies, bees, wasps, locusts are also hawked aerially out the air.



Rare



Seen



Photo



© Mike Dohrtloff

## Giant Kingfisher

*Megaceryle maxima*

The Giant Kingfisher is Africa's largest species of kingfisher. When hunting, Giant Kingfishers dive into the water, often submerging themselves to gather their catch.



Uncommon



Seen



Photo