

MEDIA RELEASE

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Vote for South Africa's Favourite Bird

Johannesburg, 1 December 2014: So, which is South Africa's Favourite Bird? Is it the noisy Hadedra, the beautiful Orange-breasted Sunbird, the majestic Martial Eagle, or the ubiquitous Cape Robin-Chat? It will certainly not be the chicken because, during this poll, "...chickens don't count".

BirdLife South Africa is running an online poll from 1 December to 28 February, and encouraging South Africans to vote for their favourite bird. A number of celebrities, such as John Robbie and Bruce Fordyce, will be campaigning for their favourite birds.

There are an incredible 845 species of birds in South Africa. Therefore, no matter where you are, you live side by side with birds. You can see them in your garden, on the way to work, up in the mountains, on the beach and in the bush. Just look out your window and step out of your front door, and you will see and hear birds.

The experts at BirdLife South Africa have whittled down the list of South Africa's birds to 52 species and invite all South Africans to vote for your favourite bird in this fun and feathery poll.

Sportspersons and celebrities will be campaigning for "their" favourite bird. John Robbie will be encouraging people to vote for the voice of Africa, the African Fish-eagle. Bruce Fordyce, the world's legendary Comrades athlete, hopes that the Spotted Thick-knee will be in the running. Jenny Crwys-Williams likes the Spotted Eagle-Owl, while weatherman, Simon Gear, is hoping that the rainbird, the Burchell's Coucal, will reign supreme. Journalist James Clarke will be routing for the Dark-capped Bulbul, one of the more common garden birds in South Africa.

To see photos, fun captions, campaigners' motivations and videos, and to vote, go to www.birdlife.org.za/vote.

For more information or interviews please contact: Nikki McCartney (marketing@birdlife.org.za, 013-764 3370, 083 6361060) or Mark Anderson (ceo@birdlife.org.za, 011-7891122)

Notes for Editors: The vision of BirdLife South Africa is to promote the conservation, research, understanding, observation and enjoyment of natural birds and their habitats. BirdLife South Africa is the largest, dedicated bird conservation organisation in the country, and relies on donor funding and financial support from the public to carry out its critical conservation work. For more information, visit www.birdlife.org.za.