



## MEDIA RELEASE

**For immediate use:**

### **Plenty on offer at this year's Sasol Bird Fair**

**Johannesburg, 24 August 2015:** Join Sasol, BirdLife South Africa and SANBI (South African National Biodiversity Institute) at the Walter Sisulu National Botanical Garden for the Sasol Bird Fair, to be held on 5 and 6 September 2015.

The Sasol Bird Fair provides an opportunity to learn more about the measures being taken to conserve our country's birds and their habitats, especially through the work of BirdLife South Africa. Other conservation NGOs will also be exhibiting at the Sasol Bird Fair, including the Endangered Wildlife Trust, SANParks Honorary Rangers, the Rare Finch Conservation Group and the Mabula Ground Hornbill Project.

The Sasol Bird Fair is an annual gathering of all things related to birds, including bird walks by guides from Birding Ecotours, a photography workshop and an exhibition of bird feeders, optics, birding apps, bird books, birding destinations. Exhibitors include bird clubs from the Gauteng area, Elaine's Birding and Wildlife Products, Penguin Random House, PDA Solutions, Adventures with Nature, Briza Publications, Bird and Wildlife Clocks, Richard du Toit Photography, Zeiss, Swarovski, Pentax, Nikon, Rockjumper Birding Tours, Mopane Bush Lodge and many more.

There is also a focus on children, with interactive educational activities which will inspire young minds to become interested in birds and their conservation. These activities will have a particular focus on the Bird of the Year for 2015, the Blue Crane.

Hanneline Smit-Robinson, BirdLife South Africa's Terrestrial Bird Conservation Manager said, "The Blue Crane is South Africa's national bird and features on the five cent coin. As such, it is one of the most recognisable birds in South Africa. Threats to the Blue Crane include habitat loss, illegal trade, power-line collisions, poisoning and active persecution by landowners. Education and awareness are key to its long-term survival."

The four "Processing bird images in Photoshop" workshop sessions presented by Robbie Aspeling have limited space to accommodate a maximum of 30 people per session, and the sessions are by booking only at a cost of R100 per person.

"We are excited to host the Sasol Bird Fair again this year. Our gardens are home to over 220 species of birds including a breeding pair of Verreaux's Eagle – we encourage visitors to bring their binoculars along to see if you can spot them." said Ronny Tshabalala, Marketing and Communications Manager at the Walter Sisulu National Botanical Garden.

Richard Hughes, Sponsorship Manager at Sasol said, "The Sasol Bird Fair is an interactive experience around birds and birding, and a celebration of our country's magnificent birdlife. We are excited to be involved in raising awareness of conservation issues. The Sasol Bird Fair is a unique opportunity to combine a fun family outing with an opportunity to learn more about the birds that share our gardens and parks with us."

For more information, please contact Nikki McCartney, Events & Marketing Manager at BirdLife South Africa on 083 636 1060 or [events@birdlife.org.za](mailto:events@birdlife.org.za) or visit <http://www.birdlife.org.za/events/sasol-bird-fair>

#### **Notes for the editor:**

##### **BirdLife South Africa**

BirdLife South Africa's vision is to promote the conservation, research, understanding, observation of and enjoyment of natural birds, and their habitats. BirdLife South Africa is the largest non-profit bird conservation organization in the country. It 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](http://www.birdlife.org.za)

### **About Sasol**

Sasol has committed itself to sponsoring numerous birding projects with the aim of fostering enthusiasm for the preservation of the country's birds. The company also supports, the Ground Hornbill project and various other initiatives – all aimed at creating enthusiasm for and preservation of our precious bird resource in South Africa.

### **About Walter Sisulu National Botanical Garden - 'Nature's best-kept secret'**

Discover a breeding pair of majestic Verreaux's Eagles nest on the cliffs alongside the Witpoortjie waterfall. This Garden covers almost 300ha of landscaped indigenous gardens and natural veld areas along the Roodekrans Ridge and is home to an abundance of wildlife with over 220 birds species recorded on site. The variety of habitats accommodates over 600 naturally occurring plant species, a number of reptiles and small mammals, including small antelope and jackals, which occur naturally in the Nature Reserve. Visit [www.sanbi.org](http://www.sanbi.org) for more information.