



Martial Eagle
CHRIS VAN ROOYEN

IBA PROGRAMME

The Important Bird and Biodiversity Areas (IBA) Programme is a BirdLife International initiative to conserve important bird species and their habitats. There are over 12 500 IBAs worldwide.

A remarkable 847 bird species occur in South Africa, about 8% of the world's bird species. Sadly, over 15% of our bird species are threatened with extinction, mainly due to loss of suitable habitat. Managing a network of 112 South African IBAs is our best hope of conserving our threatened, endemic, biome restricted and congregatory birds. There are 10 IBAs in Limpopo.

CRITERIA FOR DESIGNATING IBAS

IBAs are determined using globally accepted scientific criteria. An IBA is selected on the presence of one or more of the following bird species in a geographic area:

- Bird species that are globally (A1) or regionally (C1) threatened;
- Assemblages of restricted-range (A2) bird species (restricted to less than 50 000 km²);
- Assemblages of biome-restricted (A3) bird species (75% of range confined to one biome); and
- Sites that either hold >1% of the biogeographic population of a congregatory species, or hold >20 000 waterbirds to meet the global criteria (A4), or >0.5% or >10 000 waterbirds to meet the regional criteria (C4).

CONSERVING IBAS

BirdLife South Africa conserves IBAs by prioritising sites for conservation action, obtaining formal protection, developing management plans for IBAs and biomes, defending priority sites that are under threat and implementing monitoring programmes. Volunteer based Local Conservation Groups (LCGs) support these projects by surveying IBAs, implementing conservation action and educating the local youth about birds and habitats. BirdLife South Africa works with bird clubs, landowners and other organisations across Limpopo to establish LCGs.

Biodiversity Stewardship is a national programme that engages private and communal landowners to assist them to formally declare their high biodiversity value lands as legally protected areas, and to improve the management of these lands for supporting livelihoods and biodiversity conservation. The Regional Conservation Manager is working with partners to implement stewardship work aimed at formally proclaiming priority IBAs as protected areas. BirdLife South Africa comments on proposed developments in or surrounding IBAs to ensure that these developments take account of valuable natural resources.

BIRDLIFE SOUTH AFRICA

BirdLife South Africa is the country partner of BirdLife International, a global partnership of conservation organisations that strives to conserve birds, their habitats and biodiversity. BirdLife International is represented in over 100 countries. BirdLife South Africa works nationally and has more than 4,000 members and over 30 affiliated bird clubs. BirdLife South Africa focuses on threatened bird species and Important Bird and Biodiversity Areas, and works with people to ensure the conservation and sustainable use of natural resources.

HOW CAN YOU GET INVOLVED?

BirdLife South Africa relies on the public, especially birders and nature enthusiasts, as well as landowners, government and NGO partners, to assist us in conserving IBAs. You can get involved in the following ways:

- Join BirdLife South Africa: visit www.birdlife.org.za
- Join your local bird club
- Join an existing Local Conservation Group, or assist us to start one around your local IBA
- Bring to our attention any threats to an IBA, and join us in advocating for the IBA's protection
- Become an IBA Champion for a priority IBA
- Donate to the IBA Fund to support ground level conservation work in IBAs

IBAS OF LIMPOPO

Name	IBA No.	Approx. size (ha)	Protection status	Qualifying criteria
Mapungubwe	SA001	30 240	Partial	A1, A3
Kruger National Park and adjacent areas	SA002	2 136 380	Partial	A1, A2, A3, A4i
Soutpansberg	SA003	389 320	Partial	A1, A2, A3, A4ii
Blouberg	SA004	36 270	Partial	A1, A3, A4ii
Wolkberg Forest Belt	SA005	351 570	Partial	A1, A2, A3
Polokwane Nature Reserve	SA006	2 660	None	A1, A3
Waterberg System	SA007	1 321 450	Partial	A1, A3, A4ii
Nyl River Floodplain	SA008	43 640	Partial	A1, A3, A4i, iii
Northern Turf Thornveld	SA009	56 090	None	C1
Blyde River Canyon	SA127	151 460	Partially	A1, A2, A3, A4ii

Important Bird & Biodiversity Areas of LIMPOPO



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www.birdlife.org.za/conservation/important-bird-areas/iba-directory





Cape Vulture

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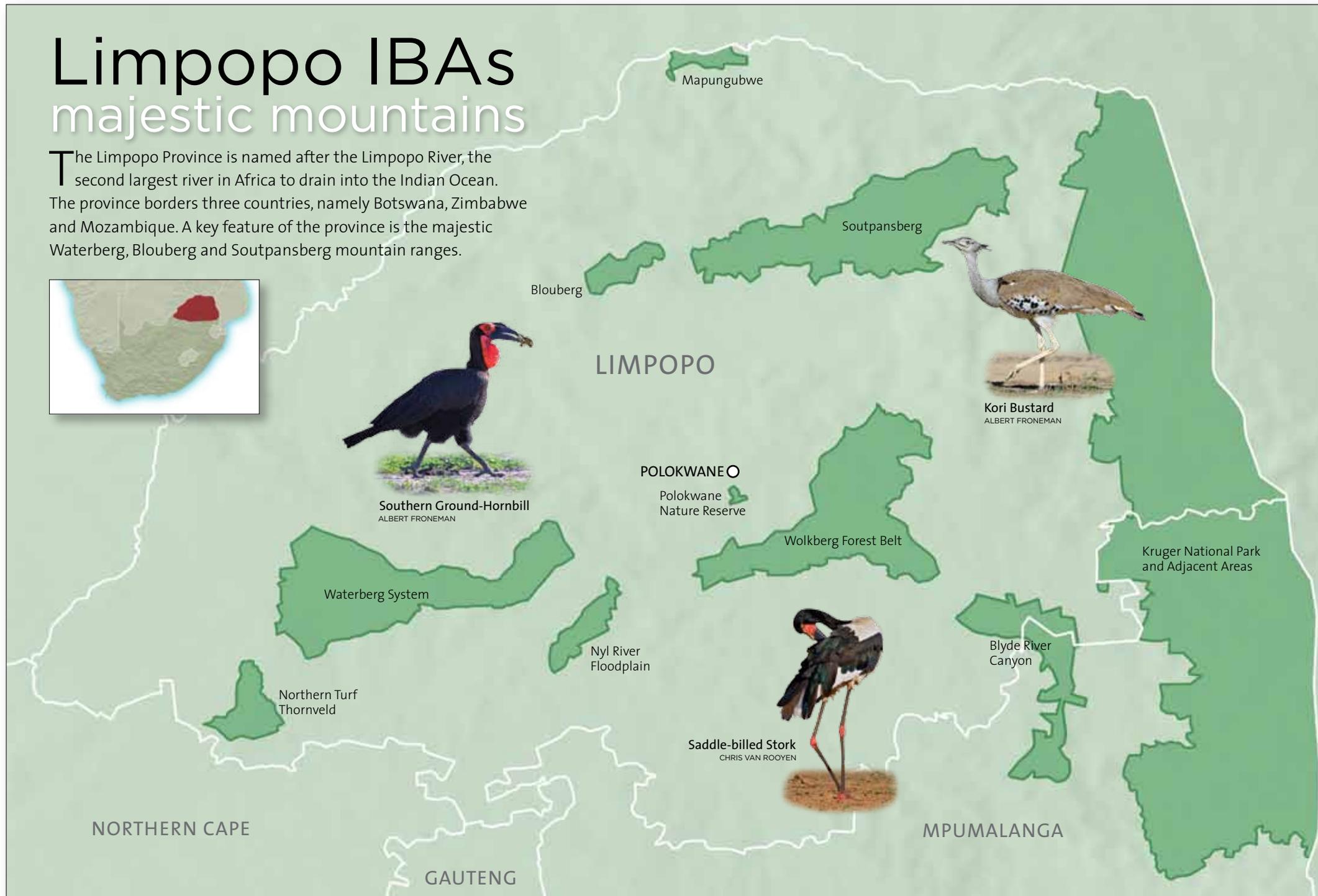
HABITAT TYPES Savanna is the dominant biome in the province, with bushveld and thornveld forming the two main vegetation types. Forests and grasslands are also found in the province. These biomes host many Endangered species. Mountain cliffs serve as breeding sites for Cape Vultures and other cliff breeding species such as Lanner Falcons. The Nyl River Floodplain (also a Ramsar site) is an important breeding area for waterbirds.

FLAGSHIP SPECIES FOR THE REGION Limpopo's IBA network hosts nearly 100 IBA trigger species, of which the most important species in four of the IBAs is the Endangered Cape Vulture. The colonies at Blouberg Nature Reserve and Kransberg in the Waterberg contain nearly 1 900 pairs of Cape Vultures. The Polokwane Nature Reserve hosts the Endangered Short-clawed Lark, while Yellow-throated Sandgrouse is a trigger species in the Northern Turf Thornveld IBA. Other threatened species are Cape Parrot, Saddle-billed Stork, Tawny Eagle, Martial Eagle, Bateleur, Kori Bustard, Pel's Fishing Owl and Southern Ground-Hornbill, while African Marsh Harrier and African Grass Owl are important wetland species in addition to the numerous ducks and waders that can be found in the province.

THREATS TO LIMPOPO'S BIRDS The most notable threats to the birds in the IBA network are habitat loss and fragmentation. In recent years, the number of mining applications in Limpopo has significantly increased and, if this is not controlled, can cause the loss of important bird habitats. Other threats include the expansion of agricultural activities and urban areas, bird collisions with powerlines and insufficient funding for the management of officially protected areas.

Limpopo IBAs majestic mountains

The Limpopo Province is named after the Limpopo River, the second largest river in Africa to drain into the Indian Ocean. The province borders three countries, namely Botswana, Zimbabwe and Mozambique. A key feature of the province is the majestic Waterberg, Blouberg and Soutpansberg mountain ranges.



Southern Ground-Hornbill
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Kori Bustard
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Saddle-billed Stork
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