



IBA PROGRAMME

Caspian Terns

BRUCE WARD-SMITH

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 23 IBAs in the Western Cape.

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 the Western Cape 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 THE WESTERN CAPE

Name	IBA No.	Approx. size (ha)	Protection status	Qualifying criteria
Olifants River Estuary	SA099	6 300	None	A1, A3, A4i
Bird Island	SA100	10	Fully	A1, A4ii, iii
Cedarberg–Koue Bokkeveld Complex	SA101	754 290	Partial	A1, A2, A3
Karoo National Park	SA102	92 720	Fully	A1, A3, A4ii
Verlorenvlei Estuary	SA103	29 600	None	A1, A3, A4i
Berg River Estuary	SA104	24 200	None	A1, A3, A4i
West Coast National Park and Saldanha Bay Islands	SA105	30 140	Fully	A1, A2, A3, A4i, ii, iii
Swartberg Mountains	SA106	179 490	Partial	A1, A2, A3
Boland Mountains	SA107	170 500	Partial	A1, A2, A3
Anysberg Nature Reserve	SA108	80 310	Fully	A1, A2, A3
Dassen Island	SA109	740	Fully	A1, A4i, ii
Robben Island	SA110	550	Fully	A1, A4i, ii
Rietvlei Wetland: Table Bay Nature Reserve	SA111	770	Fully	A1, A3, A4i
Outeniqua Mountains	SA112	145 720	Partial	A1, A2, A3
Langeberg Mountains	SA113	116 450	Partial	A1, A2, A3
Wilderness–Sedgefield Lakes Complex	SA114	11 950	Partial	A1, A2, A3, A4i, iii
Overberg Wheatbelt	SA115	603 540	None	A1, A2, A3, A4ii
False Bay Nature Reserve	SA116	1 800	Fully	A1, A3, A4i, iii
Boulders Beach	SA117	40	Fully	A1, A4ii
Cape Whale Coast	SA118	35 240	Partial	A1, A2, A3, A4i, iii
De Hoop Nature Reserve	SA119	34 130	Fully	A1, A2, A3, A4i, iii
Dyer Island Nature Reserve	SA120	390	Fully	A1, A4i, ii, iii
Agulhas Plain–Heuningnes Estuary	SA121	185 770	Partial	A1, A2, A3, A4i

WITH THANKS TO OUR SPONSORS



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

Important Bird & Biodiversity Areas

of the

WESTERN CAPE



CAPE SUGARBIRD
ALBERT FRONEMAN

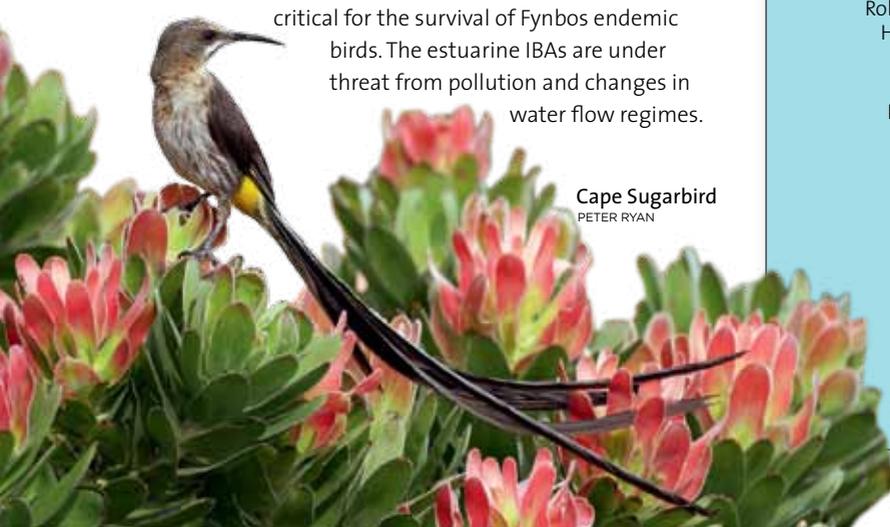


BIRDLIFE IMPORTANT BIRD AND BIODIVERSITY AREA

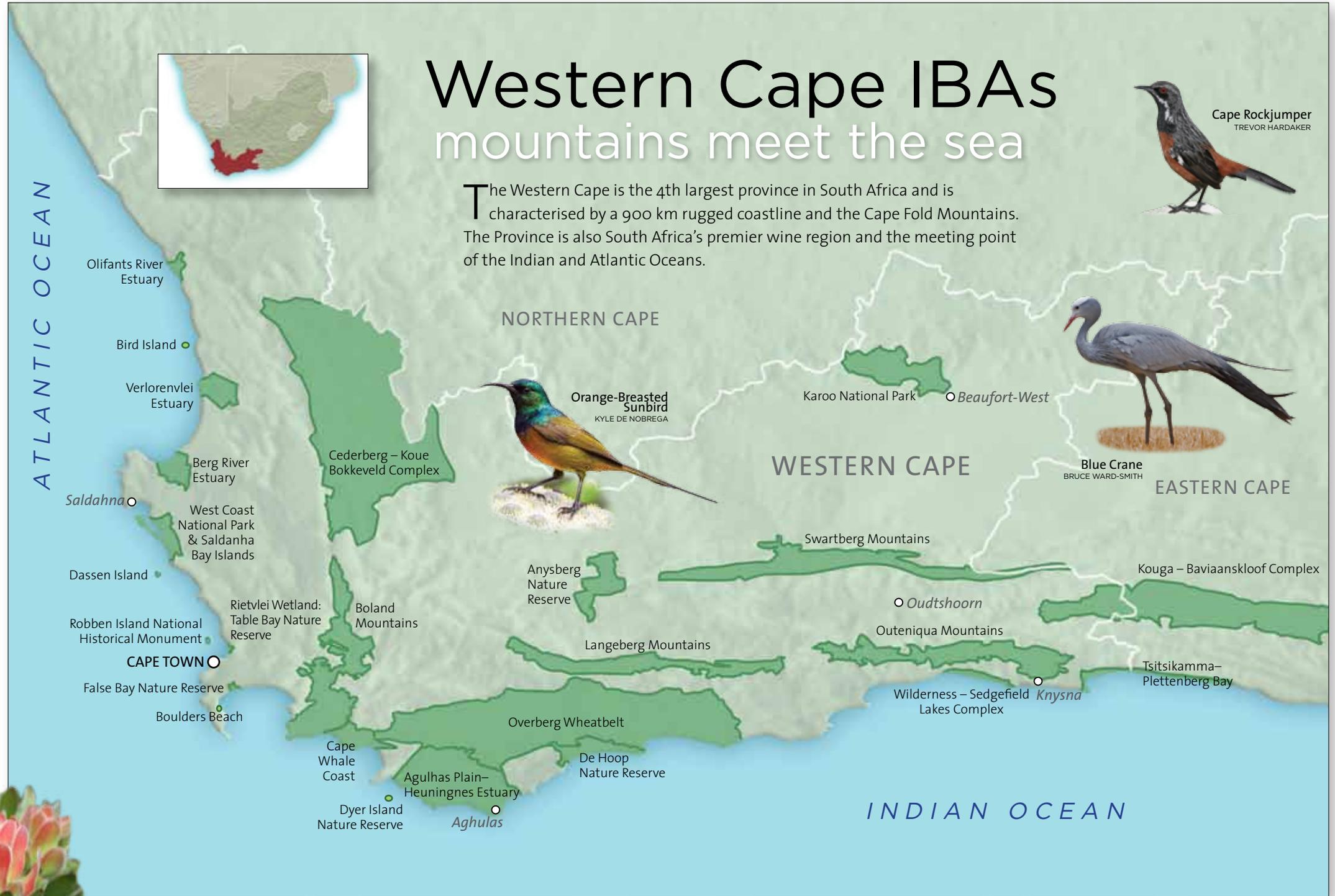
HABITAT TYPES The province is characterised by the Cape Floristic Region (CFR) which supports the Fynbos and Renoster-veld vegetation types. The CFR has over 9600 plant species and is recognised as a Global Biodiversity Hotspot due to the high levels of plant and animal diversity and endemism. The interior of the province is arid and includes parts of two other Global Biodiversity Hotspots, the Succulent Karoo and Nama Karoo biomes. The long coastline of this province contains many coastal lakes and estuary ecosystems.

FLAGSHIP SPECIES FOR THE REGION The Fynbos Biome hosts a number of endemic bird species, which occur nowhere else in the world. These include the Cape Sugarbird, Orange-breasted Sunbird, Cape Rockjumper, Victorin's Warbler, Cape Siskin, Protea Seedeater and Hottentot Buttonquail. The Cape Sugarbird and Orange-breasted Sunbird feed on the nectar of Proteas and Ericas, thus ensuring the pollination of these plants. Important wader populations are primarily associated with the wetlands and coastal estuaries in this region. Species such as Curlew Sandpiper, Grey Plover, Ruddy Turnstone and Red Knot migrate to South Africa's shores to over-winter and depend on healthy estuaries to fatten up for their long migration to the Palearctic region of the northern hemisphere.

THREATS TO WESTERN CAPE'S BIRDS The bird species which are endemic to the Fynbos are under threat from habitat loss or changes in habitat quality as a result of ecosystem modification. Alien plant species rapidly outcompete and replace the indigenous Fynbos plants which occupy the high mountain areas. Invasive alien plants also increase fire frequencies and fire intensity. These changes lead to a loss of habitat or plant species critical for the survival of Fynbos endemic birds. The estuarine IBAs are under threat from pollution and changes in water flow regimes.



Cape Sugarbird
PETER RYAN



Western Cape IBAs mountains meet the sea

The Western Cape is the 4th largest province in South Africa and is characterised by a 900 km rugged coastline and the Cape Fold Mountains. The Province is also South Africa's premier wine region and the meeting point of the Indian and Atlantic Oceans.



Cape Rockjumper
TREVOR HARDAKER



Orange-Breasted Sunbird
KYLE DE NOBREGA



Blue Crane
BRUCE WARD-SMITH

INDIAN OCEAN

ATLANTIC OCEAN