



VACANCY

BIRDING ECOTOURS FELLOW OF GRASSLAND CONSERVATION

BirdLife South Africa is recruiting a qualified, dedicated, innovative and dynamic conservationist, the Birding Ecotours Fellow of Grassland Conservation, to be based in Wakkerstroom, southern Mpumalanga. The incumbent will assist with the long-term conservation of the greater Wakkerstroom area to benefit the many threatened and other bird species occurring in these grassland habitats. A special focus will be on the highly threatened and endemic Botha's Lark and Rudd's Lark.

The work will involve scientific research, monitoring and engaging the larger community through biodiversity stewardship. As such, the role requires extensive fieldwork and regular engagement with key stakeholders, such as private landowners, provincial and national conservation authorities, and agricultural organisations. The ideal candidate must excel at relationship-building at multiple levels within the agricultural and conservation sectors to increase awareness about the threats facing threatened grassland birds and other biodiversity.

The position will fall under BirdLife South Africa's Landscape Conservation Programme and the Birding Ecotours Fellow of Grassland Conservation will report to the Landscape Conservation Programme Manager.

The Birding Ecotours Fellow of Grassland Conservation will be committed to BirdLife South Africa's vision and mission (available at <https://www.birdlife.org.za/who-we-are/about/>) and must be willing to collaborate with other organisations, both regionally and internationally.

BirdLife South Africa, based in Johannesburg, South Africa, is one of the largest, most active, non-governmental conservation organisations in South Africa. BirdLife South Africa is the South African partner of BirdLife International, which operates through partners in more than 120 countries and territories worldwide. The BirdLife Partnership is the leading and internationally acclaimed authority on birds, habitats, and issues affecting birds. BirdLife South Africa has special links with BirdLife partners in Africa and the Royal Society for the Protection of Birds in the United Kingdom.

PRIMARY RESPONSIBILITIES

The incumbent would be required to:

- Engage various stakeholders, including private landowners and agencies, about grassland conservation and sustainable land-use practices.
- Promote habitat management that benefits the Botha's Lark.
- Identify and support the declaration of protected environments.
- Incentivise landowners to adopt land use practices that will promote biodiversity in the Grassland Biome.
- Assist with developing and implementing management plans for protected areas.
- Provide post-declaration support to landowners in protected environments and assist the Mpumalanga Tourism and Parks Agency in fulfilling this role.
- Conduct rigorous surveys (point-count, line-transect, camera-trap, AudioMoth) across seasons and locations to confirm presence, vocalisations, and population estimates of target species (especially, Botha's Lark, Rudd's Lark and Yellow-breasted Pipit).
- Determine target species' movement patterns and habitat requirements.

INHERENT REQUIREMENTS

The inherent requirements for the position are:

- Relevant qualification, on a postgraduate level in the Biological or Environmental Sciences.
- Experience in conducting biodiversity stewardship in South Africa.
- Extensive knowledge of South Africa's birds and their habitats, particularly within the Grassland Biome.
- Familiarity with the South African commercial farming sector, the associated agricultural practice and cultural milieu.
- Proven ability in scientific research, fieldwork monitoring, data capturing and analysis, and GIS skills.
- Knowledge of citizen science methods of data collection.
- A sound understanding of national environmental legislation and policies, especially linked to grassland environment.
- Managerial skills (people management).
- Experience in organising and facilitating workshops, engaging with the public, and public speaking.
- Report and scientific writing skills.
- A valid driver's licence (and preferably 4 x 4 competency).
- Fluency in Afrikaans and English.
- Must be willing to relocate and be based in Wakkerstroom, Mpumalanga.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Recommended requirements for the position are:

- Good communication, organisational and social skills.
- Good negotiation skills.
- A passion for conservation and study of South Africa's natural heritage.
- The ability to work independently and as part of a team.

GENERAL

The position is based in Wakkerstroom in the Mpumalanga Province. The incumbent will work from the BirdLife South Africa's Centre at Wakkerstroom. The nature of the position may require the incumbent to occasionally work after hours and on weekends.

REMUNERATION

Salary: BirdLife South Africa offers a commensurate salary with the position and responsibilities. The salary information is available on request.

If you have any further questions, please feel free to contact the HR Manager, Dr Isabel Human, at isabel.human@birdlife.org.za.

Fringe benefits: BirdLife South Africa provides comprehensive group life insurance.

INTERVIEW

Interview: Successful applicants will be required to attend interviews in Johannesburg or via Zoom. Successful applicants may be required to complete a task, as an additional selection measure.

APPLICATION PROCEDURE

Applicants are to submit:

- A detailed motivation (cover Letter) as to how the applicant sees his/her role in this post, also providing information on how previous experience and qualifications apply to the inherent requirements listed here.
- A detailed curriculum vitae with three contactable referees.
- A list of publications and other achievements.
- A copy of the applicant's identity document and licence.

Please note:

- All applications will be treated in the strictest confidence.
- Communication will be limited to shortlisted candidates only.
- You may assume that your application was unsuccessful if you were not contacted within six weeks of the closing date for applications.
- BirdLife South Africa reserves the right not to make an appointment.
- BirdLife South Africa subscribes to and applies the directions of the Protection of Personal Information Act.
- BirdLife South Africa subscribes to and applies the principles prescribed by the Employment Equity Act. Preference will be given to candidates from designated groups, in accordance with the principles of the act and the employee profile of the specific programme.

Closing date: 17 July 2024

Assumption of duties: as soon as possible.

To apply please e-mail your CV and cover letter to BirdLife South Africa's HR Manager Dr Isabel Human at isabel.human@birdlife.org.za with the subject title "Birding Ecotours Fellow of Grassland Conservation".

For further information, contact Ernst Retief, Landscape Conservation Programme Manager, at ernst.retief@birdlife.org.za.