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VulPro NPC [Vulture Programme for the Conservation of Vulture Species in southern Africa] Registration No. 2011/127419/08 (Section 14, Companies Act 2008)

*Mission statement of VulPro: To advance knowledge, awareness and innovation in the conservation of southern African vulture populations for the benefit and well-being of society*

# The VulPro Flyer

## June/July 2014

### IN THIS ISSUE

Page 1. VulPro UK created - 'Greening the Future' shortlist

Page 2: Rescue & Rehab returns

Pages 3-4: Captive breeding update

Page 5: Educational & Community Outreach - Vulture Awareness Campaign

Page 6: Notices

Page 7: This issue's profiles

Pages 8-9: Research activities - Hooded Vulture research report

Page 10: Vulture places - History corner

Page 11: Sponsors & supporters – other publications

### IMPORTANT NOTICES (see details page 5)

**1. HELP OUR CAPTIVE BREEDING PROGRAMME ON NELSON MANDELA DAY (18 July) .**

**2. COME TO OUR SEMINAR , 6-7 NOVEMBER**

### Top News Story from VulPro

#### VulPro UK created

Vulpro UK was set up in early March 2014 by Tracey Murray, following a working visit to VulPro in February. With Bob Dalton, well known UK Falconer, on board the charity is set to support Kerri and her team in the work that they do, raise awareness and fundraise.

In Tracey's words, she says "I imagined that it would be slow to get off the ground but I'm really pleased to say that I couldn't have been more wrong. With the help of Bob's extensive knowledge and experience the word very soon got out".

UK falconer and vulture enthusiast, David Rampling, has most generously painted the amazing picture shown below from a photo of a VulPro Cape Vulture to sell for fundraising and we are selling raffle tickets to win this. Ticket sales have been brisk and we have raised a significant sum so far. The draw takes place later in the year. Tickets and details from [www.vulpro.co.uk](http://www.vulpro.co.uk).

We also had a 'trade stand' presence at 2 of the 3 major falconry events in the UK and will be at Jemima Parry-Jones' event in August. A VulPro Vulture Evening at the Imperial Bird of a Prey Academy, owned by Nigel King (another past visitor to VulPro) was a huge success and we have a number more of these in planning throughout the year and around the country. (Continued page 2)

#### Further recognition of the valuable work being done by VulPro (Greening the Future Awards)

The invaluable work being done by VulPro was again recognized in it being shortlisted by the Mail&Guardian for their 2014 Greening the Future award (Biodiversity Stewardship category). Although the award went to Izikwenene Wild Bird Trust at the ceremony on June 24, it was gratifying to be recognised in this way and have VulPro's mission to highlight the many severe threats to vultures in Africa, and to the Cape Vulture in South Africa in particular.



## (VulPro UK formed, continued)

VulPro UK has had a 4-page spread in 'Falconry World' magazine and interest from around the world in our Facebook page (VulPro Britain), twitter feed, painting raffle and merchandise. We have lots of ideas to work on and really hope to build on the solid base we have already constructed. A number of zoos are very interested in helping us and we are working on corporate sponsorship as well. We recently started offering vulture adoptions and already these are creating great interest with two vultures already adopted (see page 11) and some corporate interest in this.

We are also working with internationally acclaimed avian veterinarian Neil Forbes to present some courses for UK falconers and bird of prey keepers which, since Neil has offered his time and expertise completely free of charge, should make a significant contribution to our funds.

We will continue to look at ways to improve and increase this support for Kerri and her amazing team.

## Rescue & Rehabilitation

Species	Resident at 01.01.14 (non- releasable)	Rescued/ brought in	Released	Died	Euthanased	Transferred or donated	Resident at 30.06.14 (non- releasable)
<b>VULTURES</b>							
Cape	72(75)	28	10	9			84(82)
African White-backed	4(4)	10	2	2			10(7)
Lappet-faced	4(4)						4(4)
Palm-nut	3(3)						3(3)
White-headed	0						1(1)
<b>EAGLES</b>							
Fish	2(2)		2				2(2)
Black breasted snake	1		1				0
Brown snake	1		1	1			0
Verreaux's	0	1					1(1)
<b>OWLS</b>							
Spotted-eagle	4(2)	1	3				2(2)
Giant-eagle	1(1)						1(1)
<b>OTHER</b>							
Yellow-billed kite	1(1)	1	1				1(1)
Steppe buzzard	3(3)						3(3)
Andean condor	2(2)						2(2)
Lanner falcon	1(1)						1(1)
Marabou stork	0	1		1			0

*Cases of particular note next page*

Rescue & rehabilitation continued

### Cases of particular note

In May one of VulPro's rehabilitated and released Cape Vultures was found dead from electrocution on a farm in Thambazini. VulPro is in consultation with Eskom about the incident. *(We note in this context that the BirdLife Trogons Bird Club reported on June 2 the third of 5 satellite tagged juvenile Cape Vultures in the Oribi colony to have succumbed to electrocution in the Eastern Cape. The obvious fear is that a 60% mortality amongst these trackable birds may be representative of the casualty rate among vultures in general in that area).* This serious issue was highlighted in "Wild World" (Vol 1, No. 5, February/March 2014).

Also in May another of VulPro's rehabilitated birds, an African White-backed vulture, also fitted with a tracking device, was found dead of suspected poisoning in Zimbabwe. Prior to this, this bird had travelled widely from Zimbabwe across to Botswana and back to Zimbabwe again, contributing greatly to our developing database on vulture movement.

### Captive Breeding Programme Update

**Short Summary.** Total eggs laid: 12; confirmed fertile: 10 ; infertile: 1; broken 1.

Seven of VulPro's ten breeding pairs have laid a single egg each. One egg was found broken the morning it was laid after rolling out of the nest. Three eggs were taken for artificial incubation and replaced with dummy eggs while two were removed without providing a replacement. By not replacing these two eggs with dummies, the couples were encouraged successfully to cycle, copulate, and lay again ('double clutching'). The nest responsible for the broken egg was deepened. The pair accepted a dummy egg and are still incubating the dummy egg. They will be getting a fertile egg once it starts to internally pip, expected to be by the 10 July, for them to assist the hatching process and raise this chick. In order for this process to work, we will swap out the dummy egg for the pipping egg.



Artificial 'dummy' wooden egg.

**Copulation and egg laying.** Master's student, Maggie Hirschauer (see page 7), observed copulations, incubation, and nesting activities for an average of 3.4 hours/day. The frequency of copulations declined once the pairs began incubating eggs. The average peak of copulations (up to 5 /hour) occurred 8.85 days before egg laying. Extra-pair copulations increased once incubations began.

**Egg Summary.** None of the eggs showed extreme abnormalities. One egg was small, with an initial egg weight of 227g, but small eggs have been produced from this pair in the past. Other initial egg weights range from 262-273g. One egg shell was notably thin, as it was cracked when removing it from the nest using standard removal protocols. It was repaired with glue before artificial incubation and has since been candled and proven fertile. Another fertile egg had a small shell puncture upon retrieval. We glued this space closed even though we did not see any puncture of the internal membrane. Another fertile egg had a small scar in the shell only detectable upon candling.

(Continued next page)

*Right: A picture is worth 1000 words. A WWF composite subtitled "EXPLOITING THE ECOSYSTEM ALSO THREATENS HUMAN LIVES" — a message VulPro is perennially trying to get across to the world*



(captive breeding update continued)

**First chicks of the year.** Our first chick hatched June 24th. The parents are known as Kate's Pair; both came to VulPro from power line collision and electrocution injuries. The pair has been breeding since 2011, but this is the first year they have completed the process entirely unaided - nest building, incubation, and hatching. At time of going to press, 4 chicks have been hatched and are healthy on the cliff with parents. The survival of one was particularly remarkable. This chick had an uncertain future from the very beginning. The egg cracked when removed from the enclosure but we were able to repair it with epoxy glue. The mother habitually rolled the dummy egg out of the nest for incubation, prompting us to integrate a nest box with the natural nest. The chick required assistance hatching because the epoxy repair was over the air cell, near where the chick would externally pip, and the risk of the parents rolling the egg off the cliff was too great. The chick hatched very quickly, 24 hours from externally pipping to fully detaching from the egg. The chick was placed in a specially designed dummy egg for speedy 'hatching' on the cliff, returned to the parents in the nest box, and was immediately accepted.



Assisting chick 4 from the egg, 20 hours after externally pipping.



Chick 4 is ready for a reunion with its parents inside a specially designed dummy egg.

**Calcium Supplementation.** Bone chips are supplemented to the captive colony in excess. 1,350 g of bone chips have been consumed in total since mid-April. We have witnessed the consumption of 99 pieces, 89% of these by females. The vultures' enthusiasm for the bone chips suggest this method of provisioning is helpful in supplementing the population with needed nutrients in the pre-laying season. The full adequacy of this supplementation method will be determined by the condition of chicks (lack of deformities or bone fractures) and future egg shell condition.



**Variation in Incubation behaviours.** All of the pairs currently incubating real or dummy eggs are very attentive and rarely leave the nest for more than a minute, either to stretch their legs or hand over incubation duties to their partner. Early assessment of incubation duties shows major sex differences between pairs. One pair's female incubated the egg for 12% of the total observation period, while another pair's female incubated the egg for 66% of the total observation period. In the wild, Cape vultures share incubation activities equally between the sexes. These incubation duties are, in part, dictated by the amount of time each partner spends away from the nest foraging. This time constraint is not present in this captive population, possibly explaining the exaggerated variation.

## Educational & Community Outreach

### Routine outreach activities

Outreach activities as usual constituted a major commitment in the period January-June. 19 small groups were hosted at the Centre. Mostly members of the public, these also included a home-schooled group of 9 children, two 15-year old boys from Hyde Park undertaking their community service and a student hoping to study veterinary science.

To minimise 'humanisation' of the birds, VulPro's policy remains one of not hosting at its site large numbers of people at any one time but of 10 outreach events involving large groups, exceptions were made for 30 disadvantaged children and their teachers from "Lessons4Life" and "Kids4Life" who were hosted at VulPro in May and a Home School group of 20 children and 8 teachers in April.

Other events for large groups included presentations to audiences of 30 at Leopard Lodge below the vulture colony in February and April, 30 at the VFWT, Zimbabwe, in March, 60 Grades 10-11 children at the Walter Sisulu Environmental Centre, Mamelodi, 92 children at Peaconwood Primary School and 40 members of the SA Hunter Association in Edenvale in May, and, in June, 110 children aged 6-7 at St Peter's Girls School, 92 children at Peacanwood Primary School and 80 children at Bryanston Nursery School.

Of special importance, in view of the never-ending problem of collisions and electrocutions of vultures associated with powerlines, a presentation was made in June to 150 Eskom staff at Megawatt Park on Eskom's Environmental Day, 5 June.

### Vulture awareness campaign

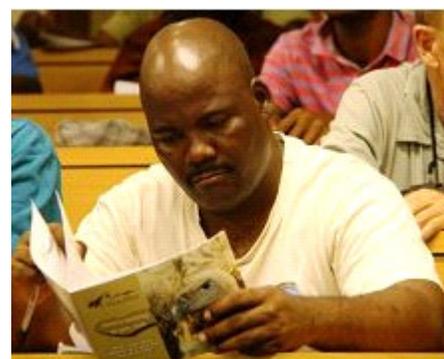
Vulture poisoning increased dramatically over the past few years. Despite decades long efforts by vulture conservationists to address threats from irresponsible use of poisons by farmers and landowners, careless use of poisons has increased in recent years. Now a new and very great concern is the direct targeting of vultures by poachers aimed at eliminating these indicators of their activities.

New tracking capabilities have revealed that vultures travel widely across southern Africa, indicating that conservation activities need to extend to all southern African countries if extinction of vultures is to be avoided from this part of the world.

VulPro, in collaboration with the Bateleurs (Flying for Conservation), launched an awareness campaign, travelling to Botswana and Zimbabwe and collaborating with colleagues in Namibia. Educational talks were well attended by students, field workers, rangers, anti-poaching staff, Victoria Falls Wildlife Trust Staff and the general public in Zimbabwe and in four locations in Botswana selected by BirdLife Botswana as targeting some of the major poisoning hotspot zones where education was felt to be needed most. Positive feedback was received at each stop-over with vultures now recognised as a species of priority. In concert, the Rare and Endangered Species Trust (REST) in Namibia held a massive air show to highlight the vultures' plight and the importance in protecting these birds.

In total, we managed to directly reach a total of 4426 individuals and thousands more indirectly through the local media in all of South Africa, Botswana, Namibia and Zimbabwe.

A fuller account of this campaign is available from Kerri Wolter : [kerri.wolter@gmail.com](mailto:kerri.wolter@gmail.com)



On the campaign trail. *Left:* lecture on vulture awareness at Maun, Botswana. *Right:* Riveted by VulPro's booklet

**HELP OUR CAPTIVE BREEDING PROGRAMME ON NELSON MANDELA DAY (18 July) AND SECURE THE NEXT GENERATION OF CAPE VULTURES**

VulPro's Cape vulture captive-breeding program is expanding! We need more *Rhus lancea* (Bastard Willow) trees to provide our breeding birds with nesting material. *Rhus lancea* (Bastard Willow) branches are non-toxic to the birds and the moist leaves regulate humidity for proper egg incubation.

You can help by donating *Rhus lancea* (Bastard Willow) trees over 1.5 m tall, or 20 to 40L.

**This Nelson Mandela Day (18 July 2014), come and help us donate and plant trees to keep our breeding birds happy and healthy.**

**WHEN?** 10AM to 12PM

**WHERE?** VulPro, North West Province (see [www.vulpro.com](http://www.vulpro.com) for driving directions, -25.710994° 27.952720°)

**WHO?** All are welcome

**WHAT?** Help us plant trees for nesting material, please donate at least one *Rhus lancea* tree per group



# Vulture Seminar

Looking Towards the Future, 6 & 7 November 2014



## Invitation

1 & 1/2 day seminar will highlight current research and pressing threats affecting all southern African vultures. Presentations will discuss captive-breeding efforts, rehabilitation, wind-farm development, power line collision mitigation, veterinary and other drug uses, and generating farmer involvement in conservation.

Schedule will include:

- ° Research presentations
- ° Focus groups
- ° Plan future actions and assign responsible persons
- ° Set time-lines for actions

Venue: VulPro  
Hartebeespoort  
-25.710994° 27.952720°

Please enquire for accomodation details  
Registration fee 300 ZAR

RSVP by 31 July 2014 to  
Maggie: [mhirscha@gmail.com](mailto:mhirscha@gmail.com)

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## This Issue's Profiles

My name is **Obert Gayesi Phiri**. I am 31 years old and from Zimbabwe. I started working with VulPro in 2007 as a general worker with the love of animals. As time went by, I got more and more interested in vultures, as a result Kerri has taught me more about vultures. Acknowledging the vulture threats and seeing the declining number of vultures, I decided to be a helping hand to the vultures and to be the voice of vultures to the people. I am now interested in educating people about vultures, trying to make them aware of how their activities affect vultures. I hope through the education programme people will become aware of how special and important these birds are. My mission is helping reduce the number of vultures that die every year through education. It is my wish that the breeding programme becomes a success and the Cape Vulture can be reintroduced as a breeding species in countries where it is extinct.



### Hannah Williams

I can trace the start of my appreciation for raptors back to Valentino the barn owl. I volunteered at WildCare, Inc., a rehabilitation center for injured and orphaned wildlife, while studying animal behavior at Indiana University. For three years I conducted education programs with Val and other owls and hawks on my glove. My studies of East African ecosystems, cultures, and Kiswahili language steered me to managing two primate research projects (chimpanzee and blue monkey) in remote locations in Kenya and Uganda. While abroad, I found myself longing to work with raptors, so upon returning to the United States I spent a year volunteering at Raptor Rehabilitation of Kentucky, Inc. I found there were many questions concerning release success left unanswered, ultimately inspiring my Master's research. I could have directed similar research in the United States, but my love for African birds and desire for a less-American lifestyle guided me to VulPro. When my research is finished I am certain I will continue in the raptor research field. I hope to find a job that allows me to conduct field work while contributing to the conservation of threatened species.



### Maggie Hirschauer

I am a Masters student studying Zoology at Rhodes University. My research interests focus on release success in raptors. My project at VulPro investigates the post-release survival of VulPro's captive-bred chicks. I will measure release 'success' by fitting each bird with a GPS unit to track its movements and range accumulation and by observing their behaviours at VulPro's feeding site. The aim is to determine the best age to release these birds in the Magaliesberg and for planned re-introductions in Namibia."



## VulPro Media Interest & Publicity

The activities and mission of VulPro continue to intrigue the media resulting, since the beginning of the year (i) in written articles in *Kormorant*, *Africa Albida* (Zimbabwe), *The Northcliff Times*, *The Ngami Times* and *Environment Magazine*, (ii) on radio and television with CNN, SABC News, eNews Channel Africa, Radio 702, Radio Today, Algoa FM and the Botswana News Channel, and (iii) other communication channels, such as the Cheetah Conservation Facebook page and WildAid.org. Of special interest for media coverage this period has been the problems of nearby powerlines for VulPro itself and the awareness campaign by VulPro in Botswana, Namibia and Zimbabwe, as well as South Africa.

## VulPro Research Activities

The monitoring programme to study vulture behaviour through sightings of tagged birds and following those fitted with tracking devices continues to constitute a major part of VulPro's research activities. This is a long-term programme and will continue indefinitely. A number of other shorter term and smaller projects, involving people from widely ranging of communities are also underway or envisaged.

**'Personality', dispersal and rehabilitation success.** Hannah Williams, a PhD student at Swansea University, UK, is studying the importance of 'personality' in individual behaviour and dispersal of Cape Vultures and the relation of this to rehabilitation success. In the wild it is well known that vultures follow each other to carcasses, and once on the ground compete with other individuals for access to that carcass. The success of wild birds will depend on their ability to locate carcasses, follow or lead others and their dominance at the carcass. We predict that vultures will differ in their ability to succeed in the wild due to their personality. Hannah's project is examining whether Cape Vultures differ in their 'personality' or the degree to which they are bold or risk-taking individuals with a series of observational tests designed to monitor the exploration behaviour of individuals. Do, like other social species, bold vultures explore a new environment to a greater extent than shy individuals? Individual personality is then compared to the dominance of the individual in a social feeding context. Eight individuals released from VulPro, following a short rehabilitation were equipped with temporary GPRS devices. Having quantified the boldness of these individuals in our personality tests, we are now able to relate this to their exploratory behaviour in the wild. The idea here is that bold individuals will venture further on release. If this is indeed the case, understanding the potential distribution and range of individuals on release can further the success of rehabilitation for this social vulture species.

Other projects underway, or in prospect, are:

- Working with Mark Kielkowski from Eskom, cameras were set up inside the rehabilitation enclosure to study the length of vulture streamers in order to further investigate the effects of streamers on power lines and how to mitigate the power line problem with streamers
- Genetic profiling of captive bred birds with the National Research Gardens, Pretoria Zoo
- A Master's project by Maggie Hirschauer, Grahamstown University, on breeding behaviour among non-releasable vultures in VulPro's captive breeding programme (see pages 3-4)
- Studies on Hooded Vultures by means of tracking devices and camera traps (report as follows:)

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## MOVEMENT ECOLOGY, FEEDING BEHAVIOR, AND CONSERVATION OF HOODED VULTURES IN OLIFANTS RIVER GAME RESERVE: REPORT ON FIELD WORK CONDUCTED IN JUNE 2014

### Project Goals

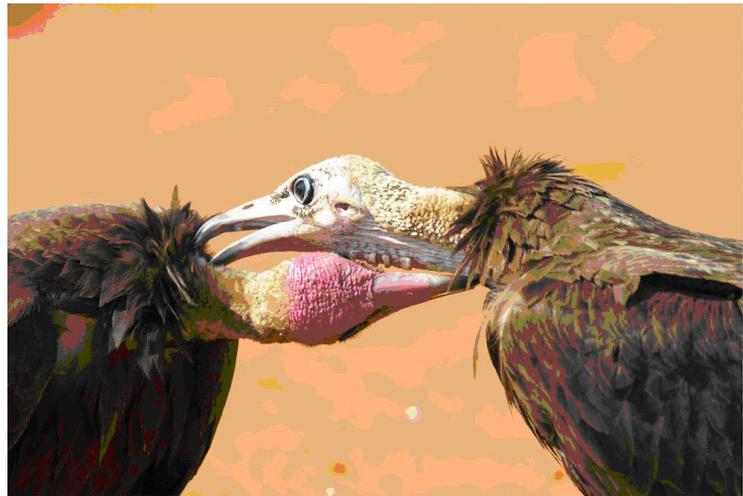
The project goals are to (1) assess the movement ecology of Hooded Vultures breeding in Olifants River Game Reserve, (2) identify factors responsible for population declines in the species in Africa overall, and (3) work together with government officials and local residents, and with local, regional, and international conservation organizations, to reverse declines in populations of Hooded Vultures and other African vultures. These goals are in keeping with Hawk Mountain's long-standing principle of protecting common birds while they are still common.

### Background

The Hooded Vulture is one of the most common and widespread scavenging raptors in Africa. Together with the Egyptian Vulture, it also is Africa's smallest obligate scavenging raptor. Hooded Vultures are widely associated with human-dominated landscapes north of the Equator, but are decidedly less so south of the Equator, a difference in behavior that is as yet unexplained. Until recently, Hooded Vultures have been little studied, in part because of their high abundance and dependence upon and close association with humans. (Continued next page)

(Hooded Vulture research report continued)

Populations of Hooded Vultures were estimated at 320,000 in the late 1980s. Current estimates suggest a maximum of 197,000 adult birds, with an overall population decline of more than 50% during the last 50 years, with most of the decline occurring over the last 25 years. Because of ongoing declines, the International Union for the Conservation of Nature (IUCN) now lists the species as Endangered globally.



Hooded Vultures allopreening in The Gambia

The movement ecology of Hooded Vultures is largely unknown as is their parental behavior and competitive abilities at carcasses. Observations of several marked birds in Zimbabwe suggest regular movements exceeding 200 km. In West Africa, populations are thought to move north-south with seasonal rains. Overall, Hooded Vultures appear to be less mobile in areas where they are highly commensal with humans. The species' use of human scraps and leftovers in and around human settlements places it in direct competition with feral dogs, whose populations are likely to increase as those of Hooded Vultures decline. Little is known of its parental behavior.

### Conservation Research Actions at Olifants River Nature Reserve in 2013-2014

In autumn of 2013 Kerri Wolter and Walter Naser successfully deployed satellite tracking devices on four about-to-fledge nestling in Olifants. Recently, in June they visited the game reserve together with observers Dr. Keith L. Bildstein from Hawk Mountain Sanctuary in Pennsylvania USA, Dr. Marc Bechard from Boise State University in Idaho USA and Nobuhle Thelma Mabhikwa from VulPro. The primary goal was to assess the size of the local population of Hooded Vultures breeding and roosting there. Initial rough estimates based on our observations suggest that as many as 80 Hooded Vultures roost in trees at the site, mainly along the river. Intriguingly, at least two thirds of the birds seen were young-of-the-year and sub-adults, suggesting that the site serves as a major breeding area and nursery grounds.

During the first full day of observations three of the four Hooded Vultures that we had tagged with satellite transmitters as nestlings in October 2013 were re-sighted. Two of these birds we had tagged with devices that had failed to turn on and reveal locations. We successfully recaptured one of these birds on 11 June and replaced the non-functional unit. Unfortunately, we were unable to capture and refit the second bird. We hope to do so on our next visit to the site in November. We also successfully placed a camera trap at one nest site and plan to place three additional camera traps at three other sites later this winter.

The better parts of four days were spent observing Hooded Vulture feeding behavior, initially on experimental "carcasses" of beef and subsequently on an impala. As expected, larger carcasses attracted numerous African White-backed Vultures which made trapping the far-smaller and subordinate Hooded Vultures impossible. That said, we refined our trapping techniques during the course of our field work and are now in a much better position to capture additional Hooded Vultures when we return in November with four additional tracking devices. Pending permission from the Reserve to do so, we also would like to wing-tag additional individuals, so that human residents of the reserve can identify the birds and provide us with additional information on their movements.

The large numbers of roosting and breeding birds, as well as the cooperation of professional staff at the site, make the Reserve an ideal location for studies of Hooded Vultures there and we look forward to continuing our work on this endangered species well into the future. In mid-July we plan to send maps of the movements of the three birds that are now carrying working transmitters.

## Vulture places

In our issue a year ago, we drew attention to the use of the term “vulture funds”, commonly used in financial journalism to describe ‘swooping’ to take up debts of debtors in financial distress. This year, a web search has revealed the existence of two ‘vulture places’, presumably named after the birds frequenting the areas.

The Vulture (Italian: Il Vulture) is a geographical and historical region in the northern part of the province of Potenza, in the Basilicata region of southern Italy. The area takes its name from the extinct volcano Monte Vulture (1326 m) which last erupted 40 000 years ago.



Above: Monte Vulture, southern Italy. (Picture from the web)

Several thousand km west of Il Vulture in the USA are the the Vulture Mountains, a 47 km long, arid, low-elevation mountain range in northwest Maricopa County, Arizona, at the north perimeter region of the Sonoran Desert. In 1863, Henry Wickenburg discovered the Vulture Gold Mine which quickly led to the establishment of Vulture City. Vulture was a rich gold mine yielding \$15/ton . The town, with a colourful history, had a population of 5,000 at its peak. It was a place of violence. Eighteen of its former residents died on the hangman’s nose dangling from the branches of the ancient ironwood tree that still thrives next to the ruins of Henry Wickenburg’s old cabin. More died in robberies or through many other acts of lawlessness. A few of those souls are said to haunt the many buildings of the decaying town. Wickenburg died a pauper despite the fact that his mine produced millions in gold. He ended his own life with a colt revolver. After the mine closed in the

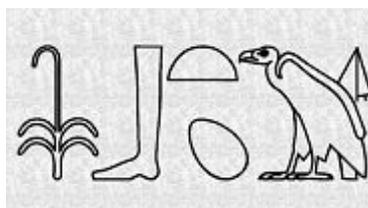
Below: Vulture goldmine (ruin), Arizona, USA. (Picture by Dolores Steele, from the web)



## History corner

### Vultures in the Bible and ancient texts

Interesting coverage of mentions of vultures in the Bible and other ancient texts was posted by one Citizen Green on December 6, 2012 (<http://livingvulture.wordpress.com/2012/12/06/vultures-in-the-bible/>). In the King James version of the Bible, there are four mentions of vultures – Leviticus 11:13-19, Deuteronomy 14:11-18; Job 28:7; Isaiah 34:15 – but he points out several references to eagles that probably should have been vultures (there being no vultures in England, the translators probably stuck to what they were familiar with). These are corrected in the newer versions and, apparently, in the Complete Jewish Bible, ‘vulture’ is used 16 times. The pictures are also from Citizen Green’s posting.



The hieroglyphic name of the Egyptian goddess Nekhebet



Assyrian vulture-priest

## Sponsors & Supporters

As always, VulPro wishes to extend enormous thanks to its many generous sponsors and donors as listed in the box below. Vulture survival depends on this type of interest and help as we try to bring about a sea-change in human attitudes in Africa and worldwide to these birds and, as with so many other animal species, to their right to exist and to the conditions that must be generated and maintained to ensure this right is exercised.

VulPro welcomes the newly created VulPro UK, as covered on pages 1 and 2, and greatly appreciates the efforts of Tracey Murray, Bob Dalton, David Rampling, Nigel King, Neil Forbes and all others involved in this supportive enterprise.

<p><i>Anglo-American Platinum</i>  <i>Beluit Investments</i>  <i>Bioweb (Pty) Ltd</i>  <i>Boehringer-Ingelheim</i>  <i>Chester Zoo</i>  <i>Cheyenne Mountain Zoo</i>  <i>Columbus Zoo Conservation Fund</i>  <i>Computer Facilities</i>  <i>Copper Sunset Sand (Pty) Ltd</i>  <i>DHL Supply Chain</i>  <i>Glencore Xstrata</i>  <i>Hernic Ferrochrome</i>  <i>Living Creatures Trust</i>  <i>Lomas Wildlife Protection Trust</i>  <i>Mazda Wildlife Fund</i>  <i>National Birds of Prey Trust</i>  <i>Natural Encounters Inc</i>  <i>Rand Merchant Bank (RMB)</i>  <i>Samancor - Western Chrome Mines</i>  <i>The Tusk Trust</i>  <i>Wild Exposure</i></p>		<p><b>ALSO —</b>  <i>The many donations from individuals and groups, and the Castle 2 Palace team and</i>  <b>ADOPTIONS</b>  <i>ABC Autoparts, the male bataleur and Cape Vultures, Harry and Mafuta</i>  <i>Jika Africa, Cape Vultures, Flaps and Ziggy</i>  <i>Mr and Mrs J P Chazal (in UK, see top page 2), former VulPro ambassador, and still loveable Cape Vulture Percy</i>  <i>Mrs R McKenzie (in UK, see top page 2), Cape Vulture Aysheaia</i></p>
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**And elsewhere:** The BirdLife Trogons Bird Club reported in June that their Oribi Vulture Viewing Hide has donated 5 indigenous trees each to Enxolobeni Primary School, Oribi, and Madlaizi Primary School (Murchison) in support of the schools' 'Greening Up' projects. A nice touch from vulture conservationists.

## SHOP WITH A CAUSE



APPLY FOR YOUR FREE MYPLANET CARD TODAY AND HELP US SAVE OUR VULTURE SPECIES.

EVERY SWIPE COUNTS!

CONTACT:  
[www.myvillage.co.za](http://www.myvillage.co.za)  
 OR  
[kerri.wolter@gmail.com](mailto:kerri.wolter@gmail.com)



## In other publications

WME News, Vol 7, April 2014 (Wildlife Middle East). Drs I Fajardo and N Richards are calling for information on vulture poisoning incidents in the Middle East to assess threats to Griffon vultures.

The website of the Vulture Conservation Foundation, Jun 4, 2014, draws attention to the probable role of diclofenac in the decline of bearded vultures in southern Europe.

The newly released book "The Sixth Extinction" by Elizabeth Kolbert (Bloomsbury Press) posits that we are hurtling towards the sixth great mass extinction in the 500m Anthropocene years. Unlike the previous 5, the responsibility for this one lies firmly with human beings.