



Vulture nest monitoring update for Grietjie & Doreen

7 Sept 2022

Highlights:

- On 7 Sept 2022, we did the 2nd vulture nest check for the year on Grietjie and Doreen
- On Grietjie, we recorded 9 active vulture nests (8 White-backed, and 1 Hooded Vulture)
- On Doreen, we saw only 1 inactive White-backed Vulture nest
- One of the White-backed Vulture nests has been taken over by a Verreaux's Eagle-owl

Vulture nest check

On 7 September, Lindy Thompson (EWT) and Emma Laurieston (MSc student) did the 2nd vulture nest check of this breeding season (vultures breed in the winter) for Grietjie and Doreen.

We unfortunately did not check the area around Mfubu (stands 3 to 10) because of a tree blocking a driveway, and a breeding herd of elephants in the road, but this is okay, and we still managed to check 37 vulture nests in total.

White-backed Vultures

We checked 28 White-backed Vulture nests. Twelve of these (recorded in previous years) were gone. Three of these nests have already failed (one has been taken over by a Verreaux's Eagle-owl, see photo below). Five nests were inactive, and 8 nests are active.



Above: White-backed Vulture nest 'WbVn321' on Grietjie (between stands 15 and 16), on 7 Sept 2022.



Above (top): A Verreaux's Eagle-owl in nest 'WbVn299' on Grietjie (between stands 14 and 15), on 7 Sept 2022. **Above (bottom):** the same nest, with a White-backed Vulture incubating in it on 30 June 2022. Raptors do take over each other's nests sometimes. It is also possible that the vulture's breeding attempt failed before the owl moved in.

Hooded Vultures

We checked 9 Hooded Vulture nests. Six of these (recorded in previous years) were gone. We recorded one active and two inactive Hooded Vulture nests. The next check will take place in early October.

We thank Ian Nowak, Logan van Zyl, Jason Nel, and the staff, home-owners and residents of Grietjie and Doreen for kindly allowing us access to check vulture nests.



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