

BLACK-SHOULDERED KITE MOVEMENTS IN THE SOUTH WESTERN CAPE

Dr D. Whitelaw
24 Twickenham Road
Mowbray
CAPE TOWN 7700

The Black-shouldered Kite is a common resident in the south western Cape, occurring around the vineyards of the Stellenbosch area, the wheatlands of the Malmesbury area and the sandveld along the west coast. Road counts have been conducted in two of these areas for two seasons. From these observations it would appear that the numbers of Kites in these two areas fluctuate inversely (eg. during late summer numbers increase in the wheatlands and are down in the sandveld, while in winter the reverse is true).

In order to investigate this observation further it was proposed to mark the birds in the two areas with wing tags of two different colours (as described in Safring News 6 (1):38-43 by Alan Kemp). Regular counts would then be made to determine whether interchange occurred between these two areas. If this proved to be a practical proposition the Stellenbosch area would be investigated at a later date.

This scheme was first discussed with Carl Vernon at the beginning of 1977 and was approved. A start was made with the tagging in the early summer of 1977 and has continued to date (May 1978) during which time 25 birds in the Cape Town - Durbanville - Malmesbury area, and 9 in the Darling - Langebaan area were tagged. No cross-sightings have been made to date. I would be pleased to receive reports of any sightings.
