

## *Jackal Buzzards on the Peninsula in 2009* by Lucia Rodrigues.



photograph by Ronelle Visagie

### *Juvenile Jackal Buzzard*

Last year I sent in a short report on the Jackal Buzzards found along the peninsula mountain chain and I thought some readers might be interested to find out how they fared during their last breeding season.

My personal highlight was finding the nest of the Blackburn pair. I have been watching this pair since 2005 and never been able to pin down their nest. In 2007 they produced two fledged chicks and I have assumed from the lack of evidence to the contrary, that they did not breed, or failed in 2008. This year after much skulking around in the undergrowth, I managed to follow an adult carrying prey onto a nest and there feed it to a fully feathered chick that must have been about 7 weeks old. I was duly fully rewarded for my efforts because after feeding, the young bird spent a good twenty minutes tackling a two pronged stick in a very entertaining fashion. Once again from below the cliff, one cannot see a nest structure and their habit of using a ledge. It remains to be seen if they will use the same nest during 2010. I sure hope so.

The pair that breeds on the Vlakkenberg was hit by tragedy in the middle of incubation when the male was found in a vineyard with a broken wing. Despite the best efforts of the owner of the farm, a vet, the SPCA and Margo Wilke, when the Jackal Buzzard was taken to Hank Chalmers at Eagle Encounters at Spier for assessment, his well qualified view was that this bird would never fly again and was euthanized. During this period I visited the vicinity of the nest and found that the female had abandoned incubation and was all ready being propositioned, albeit in a slightly overwrought and distracted manner, by another male. No attempt at relaying was made.

I also managed to locate another pair, bringing the number of pairs I have been able to pin down to a nest cliff to twelve. As expected they are "deep south" on a cliff near the Paulsberg. This by no means indicates I have found them all, for at the end of March, I accompanied Ann Koeslag and Gerrie Meihuizen on one of their Black Spar expeditions to Scarborough and it is clearly evident from what we found there, that another pair of Jackal Buzzards has their home range here.

In summary; the 12 pairs I monitored during 2009, fledged 10 chicks, with the prolific Kleinkop pair producing twins yet again, the only pair to do so. Three pairs either did not breed or failed.



*photograph by Greg Morgan*

*Jackal Buzzard*