

African Fish Eagle electrocution near Wellington, Western Cape Province.

An article by E. Oettle & F. Meyer.

On 11 October 2012 there was a power outage on the farm Limietrivier, outside Wellington. The cause turned out to be a fatal electrocution of an adult male African Fish Eagle, which weighed 2400 g.

Of particular note was that the eagle had been carrying a fish, which was also electrocuted and was found next to him on the ground.

The fish weighed 940 g.

It is possible that the very large size of the fish (39 percent of the eagle's mass) caused the eagle to struggle to land correctly, alternatively the fish might have been the agent that caused the short between the live power line and the earth line. The fish had clearly just been caught, as it was largely unscathed except for where the eagle's claws had held it.



photograph supplied by E Oettle.

The Fish Eagle and the fish.



photograph supplied by E Oettle.

Power line under which the eagle was found. The dam wall is behind the power line.