

BREEDING OF THE HOODED VULTURE
Necrosyrtes monachus IN THE KRUGER
NATIONAL PARK

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Mundy (1982, *The comparative biology of southern African Vultures*, Vulture Study Group, Johannesburg.) states that records exist for only 22 nests of the Hooded Vulture *Necrosyrtes monachus* in Rhodesia, of which he visited 15, while in only three nests were the eggs measured. He makes no specific mention of egg measurements from nests south of the Limpopo River, although the average of 10 "Southern African" eggs is given as 74,72 (Range 68,7 – 78,1) by 55,89 (Range 54,0 – 57,8) mm.

Nevertheless, five South African breeding records exist, all from the Kruger National Park:

1. Kemp (1969, *Ostrich* 40:24) states that on 11 August 1967 a nest of the Hooded Vulture was found at Bangu Poort, close to the eastern boundary of the Kruger National Park. The nest, containing one egg, was placed in an upper fork of a large *Diospyros mespiliformis*, in an area of dense *Androstachys johnsonii* forest. The egg measured 77,6 by 58,8 mm (Kemp pers. comm.).
2. Tarboton & Allan (*in press*, The status and conservation of birds of prey in the Transvaal, *Monogr. Transv. Mus.*) record a nest which had one young, half-grown on 14 October 1967 and
3. ". . . one young, quarter grown on 16 September 1969" and
4. a nest, apparently under construction with a pair of adults on it on 5 June 1979.

Nests 2, 3 and 4 were all high up in forks in tall *Diospyros mespiliformis* trees growing along the Olifants and Sabie Rivers. Egg-laying occurred in June and July.

5. On 8 July 1969 the writer flushed a Hooded Vulture from a stick nest 60 cm across, lined with dry green leaves, placed 16 m up in a sub-canopy fork of a *Ficus sycomorus* tree growing on the bank of a dry river bed near Kostine Picket in the Shingwedzi area. The single egg was fresh and measured 78,6 by 57,9 mm, which is slightly larger both in length and breadth than the upper limits of 10 southern African (Rhodesian) eggs given by Mundy, while the Bangu Poort egg is slightly larger in breadth only.

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