

AVIFAUNAL MOTIVATION LETTER FOR CONDUCTING A  
DRY AND WET SEASON ASSESSMENT OF THE 5  
ILANGA CSP FACILITIES, NEAR UPINGTON, NORTHERN  
CAPE



Prepared for:



On behalf of:  
(PTY) Ltd

EMVELO ECO PROJECTS



Prepared by:



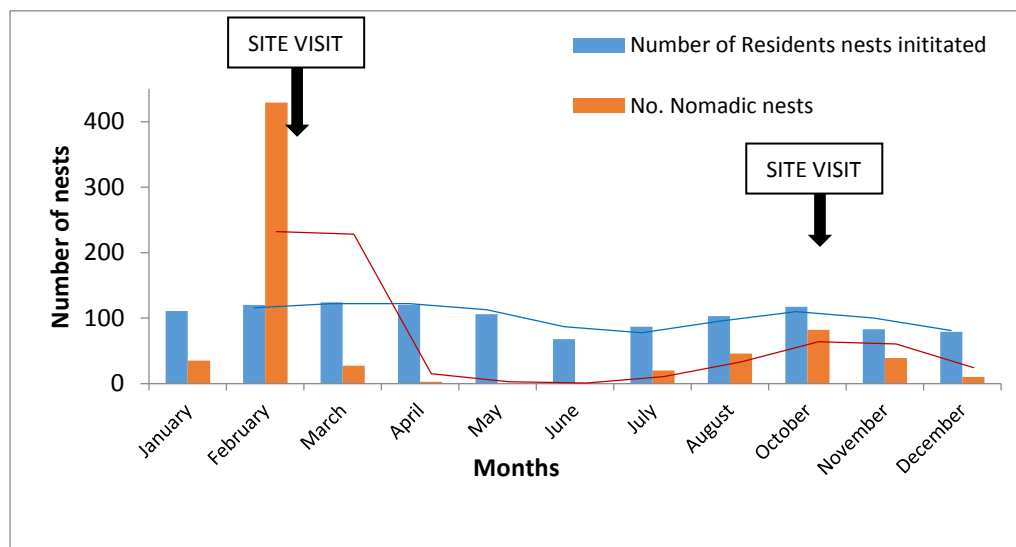
## Timing of site visits to survey birds at Ilanga (Karoohoek) solar development

**Reply to:** It must be noted that this Department [DEA] in its acceptance of the SR letter, requested that the avifaunal assessment cover the summer and winter seasons. Upon review of this report, the specialist conducted a site visit from the 31 October – 7 November 2015 and 29 February – 09 March 2016 which is deemed as spring and autumn. As such the study must be conducted within the seasons as requested by the DEA. Furthermore, no reason or motivation was provided for the deviation from the acceptance of the SR.

We, Birds & Bats Unlimited Environmental Consultants, undertook the avian surveys for the Ilanga solar site. We undertook two visits and timed them to maximise the chances of seeing as many resident birds and nomadic birds as possible present on site. Such visits were timed therefore to :

- capture the first breeding peak of resident arid-adapted birds in October-November
- capture the influx of nomadic birds that arrive with the rains and breed 2-4 weeks later.

The graph below indicates the timing of breeding in s-w Kalahari birds drawn from Maclean (1969). Our visits (shown) indicate how they coincide with the main breeding events in arid areas.



So our site visit in October-November 2015 coincided with late spring when many resident arid-species first start to breed (blue above). Furthermore, according to Lepage and Lloyd (2004) who analysed the breeding seasons of all South Africa's birds (with an emphasis on arid-breeding birds), the top breeding month is October (even for areas which have late-summer rains). Ilanga fits into the latter category. Most breeding is finished by the winter (June-July).

For really arid areas like Ilanga which have late summer (March) rains, nomadic birds respond to (fly into) areas with rains and breed within 14 days (insectivores) or 32 d (granivores) (Maclean 1969). So both our visits were timed perfectly to record resident (October) and nomadic (March) birds present and breeding in the Ilanga



area. A summer and winter visit would miss both peaks.

Lepage D, Lloyd P. (2004). Avian clutch size in relation to rainfall seasonality and stochasticity along an aridity gradient across South Africa. *Ostrich* 75(4): 259–268.

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