

Hazards in the Urban Jungle: Managing Human-wildlife Conflicts of Crowned Eagles

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Wildlife management is primarily a human response to reduce or eliminate causes of economic or social harm. However, these must be balanced against conservation goals regarding threatened species. Crowned eagles *Stephanoaetus coronatus* occupy urban landscapes of southern KwaZulu-Natal, South Africa. We identified negative incidents to human livelihoods, particularly predation on pets and livestock, and negative incidents to eagle livelihoods due to injuries, death, and nest disturbance.

Citizen science involvement was developed with public awareness outreach, and this resulted in useful mortality and incident reports. Anthropogenic causes of harm are opportunities for active mitigation. Electrocutation and gunshot wounds were identified as primary threats. Collision with structures, glass panes, vehicles and fence wires also impact crowned eagle survival.

Time-lapse camera studies at urban nest sites demonstrated low rates of predation on livestock (6%) and pets (1%). Reported pet attacks were primarily by juveniles and sub-adults, and most occurred during winter months. Collaboration of wildlife authorities with NGO's and public stakeholder input creates an environment for successful crowned eagle conservation and management of human-wildlife conflicts. Active management and falconry-based rehabilitation processes can achieve a high standard of public support and conservation outcomes for human wildlife conflict concerning crowned eagles.

Dr Shane McPherson completed a Post Graduate Diploma in 2005 at Massey University, New Zealand. He developed field work experience working on New Zealand Falcons, the Mongolia Artificial Raptor Nest Project, and conservation management of Mauritius Parakeets. Volunteering for The Peregrine Fund East Africa project introduced seemingly endless needs for African raptor conservation – this experience included falconry-based fitness and hunting preparation of a captive bred Crowned Eagle who was successfully released. This is where he was inspired for the PhD project “Urban Ecology of the Crowned Eagle” that he completed in 2015 at the University of KwaZulu-Natal, South Africa.