Endangered Birds of Botswana: The Bustards

Commemorative Stamp Issue: August 2017

- Black-Bellied Bustard
- Red-crested Korhaan & Northern Black Korhaan
- Denham’s Bustard
- Ludwig’s Bustard
KGORI /KORI BUSTARD/ *Ardeotis kori*
Botswana’s national bird. These bustards are the largest and heaviest of the world’s flying birds. Found in open treeless areas throughout Botswana, they unfortunately have become scarce outside protected areas, largely because people still kill them to eat, despite it being illegal to hunt Kori Bustards in Botswana. They walk over the ground with long strides rather than to fly; indeed, results of satellite tracking in Central Kalahari Game Reserve showed most birds hardly moved beyond a 20 km radius in 2 years!

(NO SPECIFIC SETSWANA NAME)/BLACK-BELLIED KOORHAN/ *Lissotis melanogaster*
This bustard is found only in northern Botswana. Both sexes have brownish upper-parts with black spots and bars, but whereas the female is white underneath, the male has the black breast and belly that gives this distinctive bird its name. Not the best of singers, but a stunningly beautiful bird, whose population numbers are declining largely as a result of habitat degradation.
**DENHAM’S BUSTARD/ Neotis denhami**
Little is known about the sub-population in Botswana of this rare species. Its geographic range is largely restricted to northern Botswana, notably the Linyanti concession. This species is estimated to be undergoing a moderately rapid population decline owing to hunting pressure and conversion of grassland habitat for agriculture. For the tourist, this is beauty is must-see if it can be spotted!

**MOKGWEBA/ RED-CRESTED KOORHAN/ Eopodotis ruficrista**
This is a common bird throughout most of the grasslands of the country, but is more often heard than seen; its whistling call is a common evening sound across most rural Botswana. The males have red crests which are most visible during the breeding season, when they are raised for display purposes.

**MOTLATLAWE /NORTHERN BLACK KOORHAN/ Afrotis afraoides**
The male birds, with black on the head, neck and belly, are more boldly marked than the females, which are plainer with black only on the belly. In the Spring, male Northern Black Korhaans fly noisily over the ground and then land with their wings held high and their yellow legs dangling, making a loud call “krracker krracker”. They are found over much of Botswana in open areas with few trees or bushes. Their population is declining presumably as a result of livestock overgrazing their habitats.

**LUDWIG’S BUSTARD/ Neotis ludwigii**
Another scarce large-bodied bustard in Botswana, where the distribution is largely restricted to the Kgalagadi Transfrontier Park and its environs. This ‘hard core’ desert-dwelling species is nomadic and a partial migrant, in response to rain. Regrettably, it is during these movements that it collides with powerlines, which seemingly are the greatest threat to this bustard.

*SPECIAL RECOGNITION*
BotswanaPost would like to thank BirdLife Botswana for their assistance with the distribution maps and text on the bustard species used in this issue, as well as their continued efforts to conserve Botswana’s endangered birdlife.
STAMP ISSUING POLICY
Botswana maintains a conservative issuing policy. A definitive set is released every 5 years, illustrating a theme of international interest. Commemorative sets are issued 4 or 5 times a year, illustrating themes that reveal the environmental, cultural and historical heritage of Botswana.
ABOUT THE ARTIST

Katlego Ellias Baloi was born and resides in Rasesa, Botswana. He uses art not only as a means of self-expression to reach and communicate with others, but also as a tool for introspection. His preferred medium is photography, but has recently included different graphic design approaches to his repertoire.

He enjoys challenging himself in contemporary stylized methods of visual expression and is inspired by nature and the traditional Setswana way of life. This is Katlego’s first set of stamps

TECHNICAL INFORMATION

Denominations: 50t, P 5.00, P7.00, P9.00, P10.00
Stamp size: 30mm x 50mm
Print Process: Full Colour Process
First Day Cover: 210mm x 148mm
Miniature sheet: 150mm x 120mm

Artist: Katlego E Baloi
Graphic Design: Southern Colour Print
Printer: Southern Colour Print

Date of issue: 01 August 2017
Name: 
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