



<p>WORKING PROJECT TITLE</p>	<p>Are peacocks wanted in peri-urban gardens?</p>
<p>CORE TEAM MEMBER</p>	<p>John Measey</p>
<p>ACADEMIC LEVEL OF THE PROJECT</p>	<p>MSc</p>
<p>PROJECT BACKGROUND</p>	<p>Birds are actively courted into peri-urban gardens with resources including food, nesting boxes and bird-friendly habitats. However, aside from the expected indigenous species, some visitors are alien species while others are domestic exotics. Alien and domestic exotic birds are often attracted by resources in peri-urban areas that facilitate their spread (such as tall trees for nesting, or lawns and ponds for feeding). One particular species, the peacock or Indian peafowl (<i>Pavo cristatus</i>), has increasing populations in many peri-urban areas with suggestions that they are spreading.</p> <p>Peacocks can now be found in and around all of South Africa's major cities, but almost everywhere there are conflicts. Some residents love these showy birds, while others loathe them, their faeces and their loud calls (see here). This study seeks to engage with stakeholders in peri-urban areas to ask: What are the perceived values of peacocks? We also seek to determine whether peacock populations are only sustained by residents, or whether populations are impacting on stakeholders outside the peri-urban environment.</p> <p>This MSc study will involve stakeholder surveys and focus groups to determine public perceptions of the values of alien and native bird species. The student will need to have good people skills, and the desire to publish their work in scientific journals.</p>
<p>FURTHER READING</p>	<p>Evans, T., Kumschick, S. and Blackburn, T.M., 2016. Application of the Environmental Impact Classification for</p>



Alien Taxa (EICAT) to a global assessment of alien bird impacts. *Diversity and Distributions*, 22(9), pp.919-931.

Fuller, R.A., Warren, P.H., Armsworth, P.R., Barbosa, O. and Gaston, K.J., 2008. Garden bird feeding predicts the structure of urban avian assemblages. *Diversity and Distributions*, 14(1), pp.131-137.

Lerman, S.B. and Warren, P.S., 2011. The conservation value of residential yards: linking birds and people. *Ecological applications*, 21(4), pp.1327-1339.

KEY CONTACTS

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