

VULTURE SNIPPETS FROM AROUND THE WORLD

Lappet-faced Vulture observation in the Magaliesberg, South Africa

At 12h00 on 4 May 2008, I observed a juvenile Lappet-faced Vulture *Aegyptus tracheliotos* at the vulture restaurant (25° 05'46.7"S, 27° 04'40.1"E) at Skeerpoort (in the Magaliesberg mountains) in the North West Province, South Africa. The bird was feeding on a pig carcass with ten Cape Vultures *Gyps coprotheres*

and two juvenile African White-backed Vultures *Gyps africanus*. I saw the Lappet-faced Vulture again later that afternoon roosting in a nearby tree, but it was gone the following morning. This is the first sighting of a Lappet-faced Vulture at this vulture restaurant, and the species is only very occasionally observed in the Magaliesberg area.

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Non-lead ammunition now required in condor country

As of 1 July 2008, Southern California hunters seeking targets in the California Condor *Gymnogyps californianus* range will face legal consequences if they're caught using lead bullets, which can poison and kill the critically endangered bird when it scavenges on lead-killed carcasses. In May, no fewer than seven condors in Southern California suffered lead poisoning, likely from lead-tainted carrion -- and one bird died as a result.

Lead poisoning is in fact the number-one killer of condors, and the species, now numbering 151 in the wild since it was reintroduced after near extinction, can ill afford a single bird death. Only 80 birds now fly free in California. The new lead-free ammunition requirement is great news for not only condors, but for golden eagles, other scavengers, and even human public health. The Center for Biological Diversity has been fighting for the switch to non-lead ammunition for years, and we'll continue our work to have it applied statewide.

From: Center for Biological Diversity

