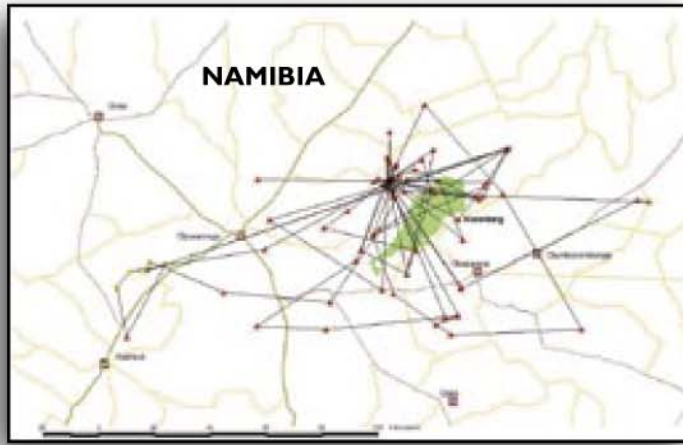


Tracking The Cape Griffon Vulture

Continued from page 4

try to collect all of this data in the field, with the PTT, researchers can collect confirmed data directly from the bird via satellite. These units cannot replace strong fieldwork, as this still needs to be done in order to watch individual behaviour and species interaction, but the PTT data collection compliments fieldwork and takes out the guesswork of individual researchers. For example, until we fitted PTTs to our CGVs we had no idea where they were roosting. We believed that most of them were in their traditional roosting areas on the cliffs, but after helicopter surveys, we could not determine exactly where they were on the cliffs. Once fitted with the PTTs, both of our adult CGVs returned to trees and have spent approximately 70% of their roosting time in two specific trees. This information was a complete shock to all of us and allowed us to pinpoint exact locations for intensive field observations during the breeding season. These observations led us to note the interbreeding of the CGV and the WBV, which will now have to be confirmed with samples and DNA testing. We have also gathered general information such as the longest single flight flown by one of our vultures, which was 420 km in seven hours. Another of our one-year-olds was kicked out of

the nest on the 25th April 2004 and proceeded to fly to the north into Angola, she then flew into the western desert coast – the Skeleton Coast. Afterwards, she flew hundreds of kilometers to the south before returning back to the general area where she was born. These were three destinations that we would not have believed our birds visited before receiving the data. The information collected has been so valuable that we are now trying to expand the number of birds to be fitted. We will track some relocated CGV being reintroduced into Namibia from



A sample of Sky Banker's daily movements during a 2 week period in February 2004. The bird radiated out to forage up to 100km away from its normal roost.

Map courtesy of John Mendelsohn

South Africa and see how they respond to their new home and we would like to find the funding to test at least two very interesting southern African colonies. One is located in Zimbabwe and seems to be composed of mainly younger immature birds. We need to know where they come from and where they go for breeding upon adulthood. We would also

like to fit PTTs on to a few birds from a large well-established vulture colony in South Africa and compare the data to our struggling colony. It will be fascinating to see how the strength of a colony could affect foraging, nesting, roosting and eating behaviour.

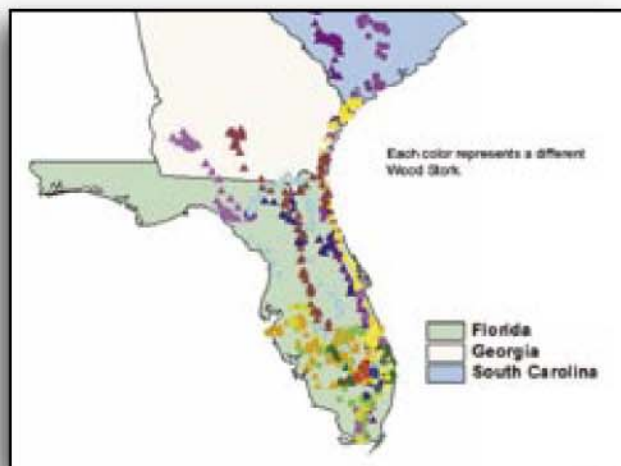
Maria Diekmann, REST

For more information, visit: www.restafrica.org

New Information on Juvenile Wood Storks

Continued from page 5

In the future we hope to place GPS PTTs on an additional 50-60 juvenile birds. Our goal is to use information gained from satellite telemetry to understand how Wood Storks respond to their environment and to create models of population change that are linked to habitat use in south Florida and beyond. With these models, we can examine the likelihood of population increases or decreases under a variety of scenarios. For example, if Wood Storks are to serve as indicators of restoration success in the Everglades, it is important to know how planned restoration activities will affect the population dynamics of the stork. We can also use these models to identify regions, habitat types, and hydrological conditions that are critical for conservation of the Wood Stork. Ultimately, we hope to use information gained from satellite telemetry to help managers and biologists make wise decisions about the conservation of the Wood Stork, including whether or when to down-list the species from "endangered" to "threatened" or to remove it from the endangered species list entirely.



This map shows the dispersal of juvenile Wood Storks from their colony in south Florida during the month of July. While the majority of tagged storks

stayed in Florida, 3 storks took up residence in South Carolina and 2 storks took up residence in Georgia. The detailed tracks provided by the GPS PTTs will increase our understanding of habitat use by the Wood Stork and will allow us to model Wood Stork movements more realistically.

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