

	<b>REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA</b>  <b>CIVIL AVIATION AUTHORITY</b>	CAA Private Bag x08 Waterkloof 0145
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## OPERATION OF AIRCRAFT

### GENERAL

#### AVIATION DISTURBANCE OF BLACK EAGLES IN THE ROODEKRANS AREA (WITWATERSRAND NATIONAL BOTANICAL GARDEN)

1. *Black Eagles (Aquila Verreauxii) have been nesting on the cliff face by the Witpoortjie Falls in the Witwatersrand National Botanical Garden since the 1940's. **SEE ATTACHED GRAPHIC.** This is the only known breeding pair of black eagles in an urban area. IN the last 8 years the eagles have bred successfully with exception to 1996 and 2000, the survival rate of the juvenile is a mere 20%. The Witwatersrand National Botanical Garden where these eagles nest is approximately 300 hectares consisting of landscaped and underdeveloped land. **These raptors are very sensitive to disturbance in the nesting gorge, more so during incubation and when there is a chick on the nest.** After hatching we close off the top vantage point by the waterfall to the public, as this is a crucial time when they are most sensitive to disturbance. **Factors that cause stress are:- human disturbance, stone throwing, noise in the garden below, off road vehicles and low overhead aircraft disturbance (micro-light).***
2. *The Black Eagle Project Roodekrans has been working for the preservation of these eagles and has monitored their breeding cycles for the last eight years. A supplementary feeding programme was started in 1993 when food stress was observed due to the ever encroaching urbanisation choking their immediate hunting territories, because of this the eagles hunting areas has had to increase from a radius of 15kms to a approximately*
3. *+/- 50kms. The monitors also educate the many visitors to the Botanical Garden on the eagles and raptors in general.*
3. *On numerous occasions monitors have observed negative reaction from the eagles when small aircraft such as micro-lights, helicopters and aeroplanes fly over the surrounding areas and the actual garden bowl and waterfall. **The BEPR requests that pilots avoid this area and do not attempt to fly close to the air borne birds, as this creates stress and disorientation.***
4. *The Black Eagle Project Roodekrans is happy to provide any information concerning this project to pilots and hopes they will co-operates with us in this regard. We would be grateful for information on any sightings in the surrounding areas of black eagles, as this information is very valuable to our project.*
5. *The Black Eagle Project Roodekrans can be contacted at P O Box 2194 Wilro Park 1731 or telephonically, Project Co-Ordinator – Libby Woodcock 082 473 8221, Sub Co-Ordinator – Sally Panos 082 880 8272.*

**ACTING COMMISSIONER FOR CIVIL AVIATION**