

BINOCULARS4CHARITY DONATIONS

Hi B4C

I hope that all is well with you. My name is Khahliso Lefatsa, CEO and co-founder of Mbeko Eco Club. My sincerest apologies for only showing our gratitude now. To be honest, excitement got the better of me when Phiwe came with the scopes to us here in South Africa. He knows that I had been wishing for a scope and camera for so long – and when he came with two, I was just overwhelmed by emotion. We as Mbeko Eco Club are jumping for joy to have these scopes. We do bird counting and water monitoring in our local wetland. We have been blessed to be situated and having grown up in a township that has the Paarl Bird Sanctuary as part of its natural attractions.

Since we have been doing bird counting for a number of years now, we have been fortunate enough to get 3 binoculars from other seasoned bird counters who have taught us the watching and counting skill. We have enhanced that skill by getting training from accredited government specialist in monitoring the quality of water at our river and catchment, thus also regulating how the condition of water has played a critical part in the rise and decline of water bird species. We did not have scopes, however, and this has impeded our efforts of keeping accurate data on the number of birds. We are still learning. We have been fortunate enough to get support from many schools by giving us access to students. We now have a growing number of avid youth bird counters who understand the value of conservation and this has led to some choosing subjects that will take them down a career pathway in Environmental studies like Ecology and Conservation. We say thank you super much. These scopes have truly been a blessing to our club and youth.

How many times are you going to do bird counting a month? We are currently doing counting and monitoring once a month, but we want to extend it to once a week if possible in order to cater for more people that might be interest in what we do.

How many schools do we work with? We are currently working with 6 schools 5 of which are in our township.

How many children are in these schools? The average number of learners per school are 1 495 in each school.

How are they benefiting through outdoors education (for example, careers in water / conservation and green STEM). We are happy to announce that learners that are going through our programme have chosen school subjects which are based on Science, Technology, Engineering and Math. This has led to a number of our Grade 9, 10, and 11 learners pursuing or showing a interest of pursuing careers in conservation, waste water infrastructure engineering and ecology. We have exposed them to Green Careers which are becoming critical and renewable energy.

What impact does the bird watching have on the learners education and the environment? The learners have now shown appreciation for wildlife and going spending time in outdoor activities. We occasionally arrange Hiking for them at the Paarl Nature Reserve and Mont Rochel to spot birds and do monitoring