

**ABSTRACTS FOR CONDOR 104(1) FEBRUARY 2002 C.E.**

**SHORT COMMUNICATIONS**

**BREEDING SYSTEM OF THE CAPE ROCKJUMPER, A SOUTH AFRICAN FYNBOS ENDEMIC**

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*Abstract.* Breeding ecology and behavior of the Cape Rockjumper (*Chaetops frenatus*), a ground-nesting passerine endemic to the mountain fynbos of South Africa, were studied for three years near Cape Town. Breeding groups occupied exclusive 4–11 ha territories, and consisted of a breeding pair and often 1–2 additional individuals, which were usually, but not exclusively, offspring of the adult pair from the preceding breeding season. Supernumerary individuals of both sexes participated in territorial defense and alarm calling and in the feeding of nestlings and fledglings of the breeding pair. Supernumerary females also helped with nest building and incubation. These findings confirm earlier suppositions that the Cape Rockjumper is a socially monogamous, cooperative-breeding species, with offspring remaining in their home territory for at least one year during which they assist their parents in raising additional offspring. New information is also presented on other aspects of the breeding biology of this little-studied species.

*Key words:* *Chaetops frenatus, cooperative breeding, mating system, nest predation, reproductive biology, South Africa.*

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