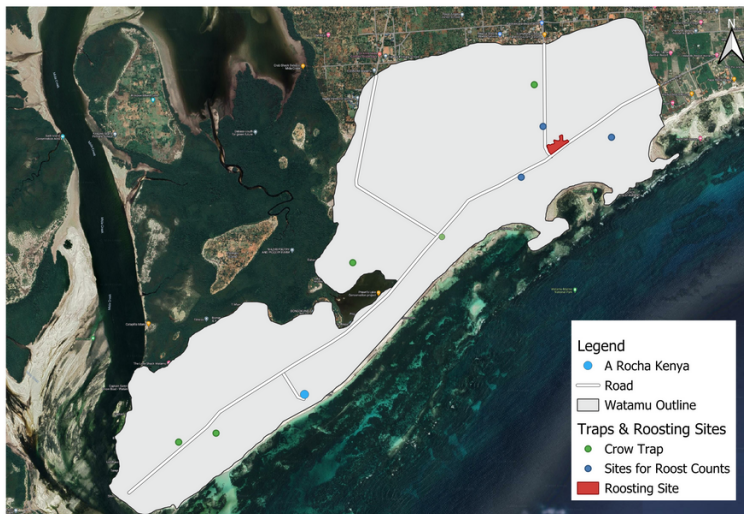


Crows No More

Activity report – February 2024: Eric Kinoti

Watamu

At the beginning of the month, foraging (feeding) sites for House Crows were mapped around Watamu and Timboni for the aim has been to identify and map big more permanent and other temporary feeding sites which are often rubbish dumps. This will inform the major sites for poisoning. So far, 13 sites have been visited some several times to make a total of 21 visits. However, of these sites three are good locations for the poisoning. We will however continue sourcing for more as it is good to have several locations in case they might discover your intentions in one location you change to another.



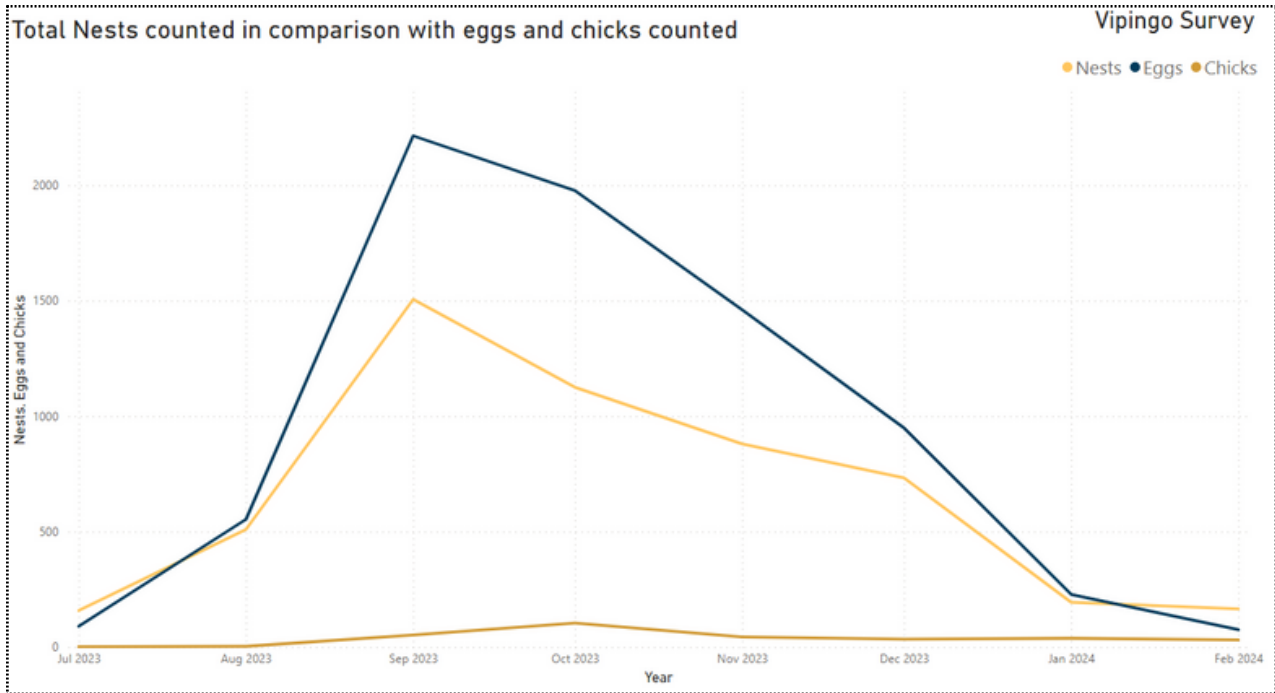
traps currently in Watamu

Vipingo



Nest and eggs collected during one of the 'hunting trips' in Vipingo

From 13th to 15th February, a visit was made to Vipingo. There is a team there doing House Crow work under the coordination of Chris Everard. They are majorly focusing destroying eggs, nests and chicks. The crow's breeding season has just ended and therefore there has been a reduction in the number of eggs, nest and chicks collected.

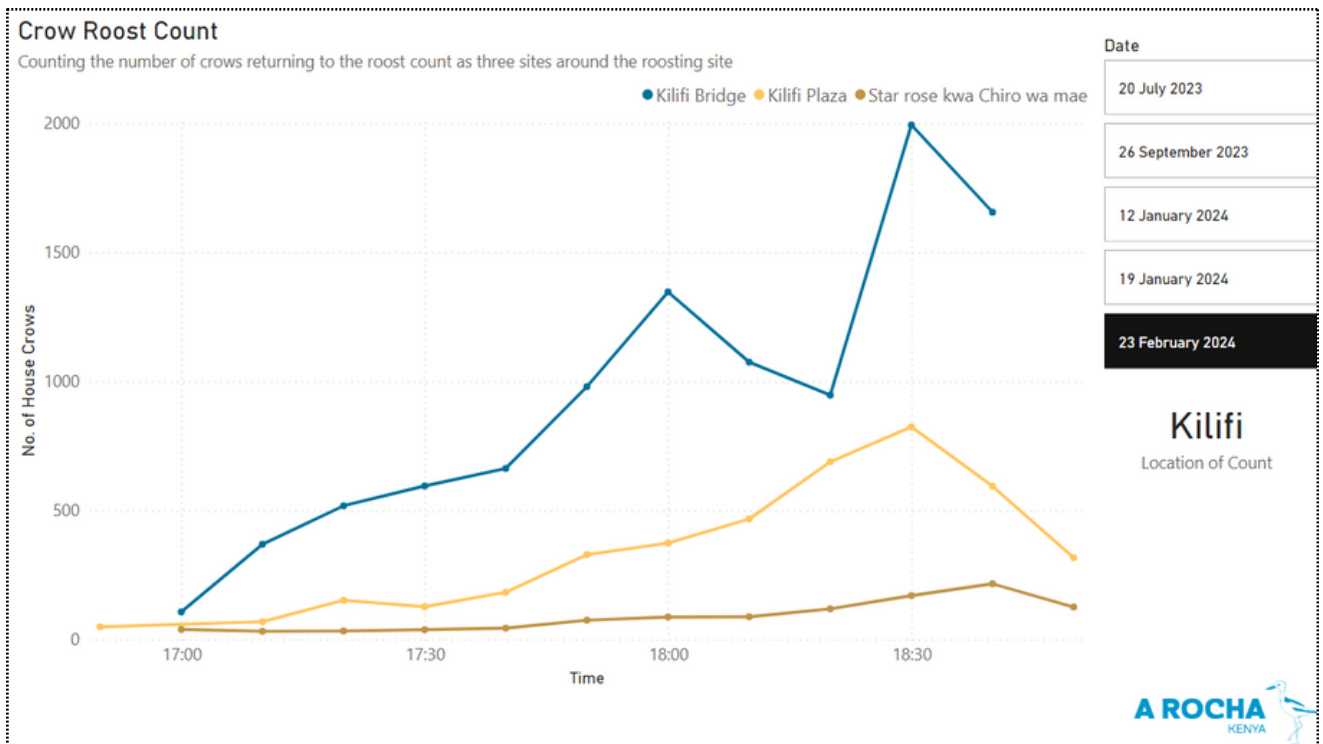


9 months data of eggs, nest and Chicks destroyed in Vipingo

They therefore have decided to run two traps. Patrick, the care taker of the traps and the one coordinating the ground work there, was explained about how the traps are maintained to ensure they achieve maximum potential. There were lots of crows at Vipingo slaughter house feeding each morning. In the evening, we did a small count in one site for 30 min and counted 518 House Crows. From this, assuming three groups counted at least 500 birds for two hours then the estimated average is between 5,000 to 6,000 House Crows in Vipingo. The roosting sites were also mapped, the main one being at Vipingo cemetery and their main feeding site is Vipingo slaughter house. The traps so far are just a week old and have not yet trapped any Crow. This is because Crows tend to first investigate something new first before exploiting it.

Kilifi Counts

On 23rd February a count was conducted with three teams of volunteers from Pwani University Environmental Club. We engaged with the Patron of the club, Prof. Tunje, who was very positive and assured us that they will be very much willing to help in any other activity as the students will learn from them. At the end of the exercise, we counted 16,481 House Crows and 2 Pied Crows.



Crows counted at the three locations in Kilifi

We are grateful for help from Simon of Salty's Kite-surfing Village; Distant Relatives and backpackers provided accommodation for the two days I was in in Kilifi to prepare and conduct the counts. While at Distant Relatives, I took the opportunity to inquire more about their trapIt was operating for sometime but this year has not been working. After consulting the manager they will be repairing it to get it back to good working condition.

Watamu Traps

The traps in Watamu are working well. I have been moving around and talking to those in charge of the traps. Some traps that were not working are now active and data are coming in.

Here are the data for January and February 2024:-

Site	Sum of No of crows killed
Turtle Bay Beach Resort	288
Captain Andy's	270
Jeremy Webbs	30
Watamu Cottages	11
Total	599

New traps are coming up there is a new one that an individual, Jeremy Webb, has built in his compound in Timboni. He constructed the trap by himself and within a week of its deployment he has caught and killed 30 House Crows. Temple Point also had one but became inactive over time. I visited Juan, the manager, and we had a chat as we looked for a suitable location, he will install one soon and probably add more.



Jeremy's trap in Timboni.

Wild Bird Rehabilitation



The red necked phalarope being fed a sugar solution when it arrived

A Red-necked Phalarope, which is a rare mainly pelagic (deep ocean) species, was brought to us on 19th. It was very weak we gave it a sugar solution. Waders are notoriously difficult to rehabilitate and sadly this one also didn't make it through that night.