

Wry, witty, wacky and warped

Acclaimed comics pair up for first time

DURBAN comedy fans have the opportunity to enjoy a "double take" of outrageously funny stand-up comedy, featuring two of South Africa's finest comedians, Al Proddgers and Warren Robertson, at the Seabrooke's Theatre, at Durban High School, from August 24 to August 26, and the Rhumbelow Theatre from September 7 to September 9.

Proddgers and Robertson have won international awards for their live stand-up comedy performances that are packed with sharp observations and warped explanations.

Now they are appearing together for the first time in Durban. It's the culmination of their quest to break boundaries, meet new audiences and be somewhere warm for the winter.

As comics they share a delight in



Al Proddgers (right) and Warren Robertson will be performing in the comedy *Double Take* in Durban.

PHOTO: SUPPLIED

humour that escapes the worn paths of racial stereotypes, exploring the more surprising and exciting as-

pects of being South African.

Proddgers has a wry and witty comedic style, which he uses to surgi-

cally expose the funny bone in personal and political material, but never forgets our common humanity.

The *South Africa Times* in London wrote of his performance: "You're likely to come away with new respect for the power of laughter and the role it has played in transforming a country."

An accredited member of the Proudly South African Campaign, Proddgers has been flying the comedy flag in places as diverse as Europe and Dubai, the Seychelles and Uganda. He was also a finalist at the *Yuk Yuks Great Canadian Laugh Off* comedy competition in Toronto.

Robertson has been described by comic legend Mel Miller as "probably the smartest, funniest young comedian in the country today".

His comic inventiveness brought success in Britain, where he was the winner of numerous comedy competitions and appeared on a number of shows at the Edinburgh Fringe Festival. He was also nominated for a Comics Choice Award in the breakthrough category and has just sold out his own show *Spamily* at the National Arts Festival in Grahamstown.

Double Take carries an under-18s age restriction to allow for the odd unscripted rant, as these guys relentlessly follow the funny on waves of outlandish invention.

Bookings through Computicket.

— Arts Editor.

• arts@witness.co.za

Rare treat for KZN bird lovers

SALLY JOHNSON

IT seems that the Yellow-billed Kites sneaked in a couple of days before Colin's winning entry. Sorry about that, but if I don't know, I can't report it! I do hope all those early birds didn't suffer too much in the freezing cold and snow. How they must have wished they stayed put in the tropics for a week or so longer. From all accounts the kites seem to have come down to KZN a couple of days earlier than usual; I wonder what the weather conditions were like up in the tropics to encourage them to make this journey sooner than other years? Global warming rearing its head again, or simply a desire to get back to their breeding grounds before some other bird took that prime spot? It's fun to speculate, but I doubt we will ever know the real reason behind these tiny little blips in the graph.

Last week I enjoyed a northern KZN adventure, thanks to a kind and generous neighbour. Along the way to St Lucia we stopped off for a night with friends in Ballito and enjoyed some great birding with them. One of those fantastic coastal lifestyle estates was our first port of call, wonderful views of the ocean and clumps of indigenous fig trees covered in fruit, which in turn attracted many different frugivores. One of my favourites is the beautiful Green Pigeon with all those gorgeous colours; red feet with yellow trousers, cryptic green body and bright red base to the

beak. They sit so still among the leaves that you often don't see them until they move.

Amatikulu Nature Reserve is a hidden gem we visited on the way up from Ballito to St Lucia. On and around the estuary of the Amatikulu River, with rolling coastal grasslands and clumps of thick coastal forest, this little reserve offers some real birding treats. We drove the 4x4 trail (not really rugged, but probably too sandy and sometimes too rutted for our little Polo) and the birds provided treat after treat.

Probably best of all was a Natal Spotted Thrush pottering along in the track right in front of us with a Narina Trogon perched on a nearby overhanging branch. This thrush is only found on the North Coast during the winter months. It migrates down to the Transkei to breed in summer; this is only the second time I have seen one. A megatick on my holiday list! Overhead a little flock of Grey Waxbills with their red rumps frolicked in the branches while a Black Cuckoo-Shrike sat obligingly still below. The bird guides often show this bird with a bright yellow shoulder patch but ours was pure black.

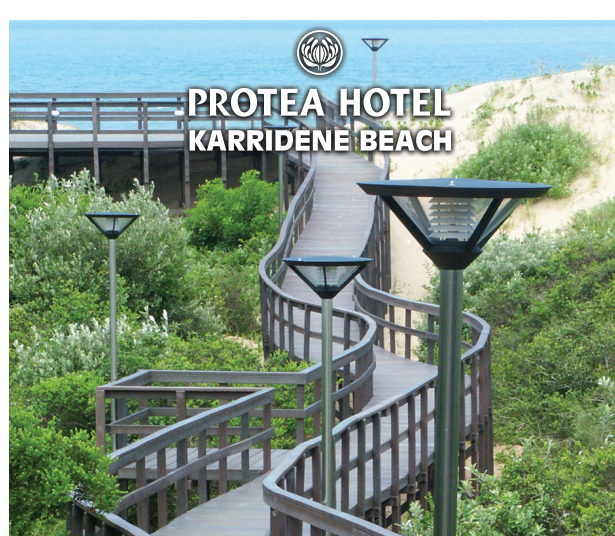
Paradise Flycatchers were back from their sojourn in the tropics, always lovely to see as they dance their way among the branches, disturbing tasty morsels as they fly. Golden-rumped and Red-fronted Tinker Barbets along with the much bigger White-eared Barbet were exciting.



A Green Pigeon.

PHOTO: DON COWIE

ONE OF THOSE FANTASTIC COASTAL LIFESTYLE ESTATES WAS OUR FIRST PORT OF CALL, WONDERFUL VIEWS OF THE OCEAN AND CLUMPS OF INDIGENOUS FIG TREES COVERED IN FRUIT, WHICH IN TURN ATTRACTED MANY DIFFERENT FRUGIVORES. ONE OF MY FAVOURITES IS THE BEAUTIFUL GREEN PIGEON.



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