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Supplementary table 1: Top 20 contributors to SABAP2 as of May 2021. Checklists is the number of full protocol checklists, and pentads is the number of atlas grid cells in which checklists have been made.

Name	Checklists	Pentads
McKenzie, Duncan	4064	1280
Branfield, Andy	3505	377
Kleynhans, Dawie	3217	666
Parker, Vincent	3187	1202
Wood, Tim	3154	928
Collett, Alan	3031	713
De Swardt, Dawie	2561	675
Archer, Tony	2525	481
Marais, Etienne	2360	719
Claassen, Japie	2321	895
Cronje, Marc	2189	488
Paton, Anthony	2078	449
Hawkins, Ross	1910	194
Gouws, Johan A	1900	435
Theron, Stefan	1894	578
Vincent, Anneke	1884	655
Guthrie, Iain Andrew	1840	598
Strauss, Wanda	1773	372
Boshoff, Willem	1747	411
Van Dyk, Zenobia	1730	411

Supplementary table 2: Papers and books which were based on the database of SABAP1 and/or SABAP2 or which commented in depth on the projects. These are the 28 papers and books with the largest numbers of citations, as measured by Google Scholar in May 2021. The first three authors are listed.

Authors	Title	Year	Source	Cites
JA Harrison, DG Allan, LG Underhill, et al.	The atlas of southern African birds	1997	BirdLife South Africa	621
JM McPherson, W Jetz	Effect of species' ecology on the accuracy of distribution models	2007	Ecography, 30(1):135–151	325
ASL Rodrigues, KJ Gaston	Maximising phylogenetic diversity in the selection of networks of conservation areas	2002	Biological Conservation, 105(1):103–111	285
JJ Lennon, P Koleff, JJ Greenwood, KJ Gaston	Contribution of rarity and commonness to patterns of species richness	2004	Ecology Letters, 7(2):81–87	287
BJ Van Rensburg, SL Chown, KJ Gaston	Species richness, environmental correlates, and spatial scale: A test using South African birds	2002	The American Naturalist, 159(5):566–577	215
BWT Coetzee, MP Robertson, BFN Erasmus	Ensemble models predict Important Bird Areas in southern Africa will become less effective for conserving endemic birds under climate change	2009	Global Ecology and Biogeography, 18(6):701–710	204
SL Chown, BJ Van Rensburg, KJ Gaston, et al.	Energy, species richness, and human population size: Conservation implications at a national scale	2003	Ecological Applications, 13(5):1233–1241	197
A Bonn, KJ Gaston	Capturing biodiversity: Selecting priority areas for conservation using different criteria	2005	Biodiversity and Conservation, 14(5):1083–1100	180
B Reyers, AV Jaarsveld, M Krüger	Complementarity as a biodiversity indicator strategy	2000	Proceedings of the Royal Society of London. Series B: Biological Sciences, 267(1442):505–513	176
KJ Gaston, AS Rodrigues	Reserve selection in regions with poor biological data	2003	Conservation Biology, 17(1):188–195	156
DG Allan, JA Harrison, RA Navarro	The impact of commercial afforestation on bird populations in Mpumalanga Province, South Africa: Insights from bird-atlas data	1997	Biological Conservation, 79(2–3):173–185	149
PF Donald, RJ Fuller	Ornithological atlas data: A review of uses and limitations	1998	Bird Study, 45(2):129–145	142
ASL Rodrigues, KJ Gaston	Rarity and conservation planning across geopolitical units	2002	Conservation Biology, 16(3):674–682	135
MP Robertson, GS Cumming, BFN Erasmus	Getting the most out of atlas data	2010	Diversity and Distributions, 16(3):363–375	132
A Bonn, D Storch, KJ Gaston	Structure of the species–energy relationship	2004	Proceedings of the Royal Society of London. Series B:	124

Authors	Title	Year	Source	Cites
			Biological Sciences, 271(1549):1685–1691	
RE Simmons, P Barnard, WR Dean, et al.	Climate change and birds: Perspectives and prospects from southern Africa	2004	Ostrich, 75(4):295–308	121
DW Gibbons, PF Donald, HG Bauer, et al.	Mapping avian distributions: The evolution of bird atlases	2007	Bird Study, 54(3):324–334	116
Gaston KJ, Rodrigues AS, Van Rensburg BJ	Complementary representation and zones of ecological transition	2001	Ecology Letters, 4(1):4–9	111
DR Wright, LG Underhill, M Keene et al.	Understanding the motivations and satisfactions of volunteers to improve the effectiveness of citizen science programs	2015	Society & Natural Resources, 28(9):1013–1029	108
A Robertson, RE Simmons, AM Jarvis, CJ Brown	Can bird atlas data be used to estimate population size? A case study using Namibian endemics	1995	Biological Conservation, 71(1):87–95	95
A Pauw, K Louw	Urbanization drives a reduction in functional diversity in a guild of nectar-feeding birds	2012	Ecology and Society, 1;17(2)	85
RE Simmons, M Griffin, RE Griffin, E Marais	Endemism in Namibia: Patterns, processes and predictions	1998	Biodiversity & Conservation, 7(4):513–530	82
AM Dunn, MA Weston	A review of terrestrial bird atlases of the world and their application	2008	Emu, 108(1):42–67	77
DH Fairbanks, B Reyers, AS van Jaarsveld	Species and environment representation: Selecting reserves for the retention of avian diversity in KwaZulu-Natal, South Africa.	2001	Biological Conservation, 98(3):365–379	74
DS Peacock, BJ van Rensburg, Robertson MP	The distribution and spread of the invasive alien Common Myna, <i>Acridotheres tristis</i> L. (Aves: Sturnidae), in southern Africa	2007	South African Journal of Science, 103(11):465–473	71
KJ Wessels, B Reyers	Incorporating land cover information into regional biodiversity assessments in South Africa	2000	Animal Conservation, 3(1):67–79	61
McPherson JM, Jetz W	Type and spatial structure of distribution data and the perceived determinants of geographical gradients in ecology: the species richness of African birds	2007	Global Ecology and Biogeography, 16(5):657–667	60
SJ Cunningham, CF Madden, P Barnard, et al.	Electric crows: Powerlines, climate change and the emergence of a native invader	2016	Diversity and Distributions, 22(1):17–29	53