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Assistant Editor
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Technical Editors
MARIJKE MAREE
ROBERT MATZDORFF
PAULA VAN DER BIJL

News Editor
CHRIS BATEMAN
Tel. (021) 681-7200

Head of Publishing
ROBERT ARENDSE

Production Manager
EMMA COUZENS

Professional Advertising
LISA REID
Tel. (012) 481 2082
E-mail: lisar@samedical.org

Art Director
SIOBHAN TILLEMANS

DTP & Design
TRAVIS ARENDSE

Online Manager
GERTRUDE FANI

Distribution Manager
EDWARD MACDONALD

Advertising Enquiries
SALES DIRECTOR: DIANE SMITH
Tel. (012) 481-2069
Email: dianas@samedical.org

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*The Pearl-spotted Owl *Glaucidium perlatum* derives its name from the numerous white 'pearl' spots on its back and tail. On the back of its head are two false 'eyes' which may deter predators approaching from behind. For its small size, it has very large feet and has been recorded killing a dove heavier than itself. Its varied diet includes insects, rodents, small birds, amphibians, lizards and occasional snakes. By no means strictly nocturnal, it will pounce opportunistically on prey such as a lizard during daytime. Its protracted clear whistling call begins softly and increases to a crescendo that reaches a volume quite disproportionate to its size. The eggs are laid in the disused nest holes of woodpeckers and barbets.*

Photo and text: Peter Steyn
Email: peregrine@mweb.co.za

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