

Black-throated Wattle –eyes nesting
As seen by Anne Outwater

At Mikocheni-B, in a garden, a nest was built on a branch of a soursop tree right beside a well-used path, at eye level. The cup like nest was about 3.5 cm high and six cm. diameter; the inner cup was about 2 cm in depth and 5 cm wide. It was woven with long brown strands of brown fiber. The outside was completely bound with spider web silk and spider egg casings.

2 July 2010



2 eggs in the nest.

8 July 2010



Still just two eggs. They were light blue-ish grey-ish green-ish splattered with chestnut brown splotches, 1.5 cm wide.



The female was sitting on the nest.

10 July 2010



When I next looked, on the 10th there were two naked chicks curled against each other, the egg shells gone. One was slightly bigger than the other. Their wings were dark against their yellow pinkish featherless skin.

11 July 2010



By the next day the first pin feathers, on the wings, had appeared. They chicks increased in size from 2.5 cm to 3.

13 July 2010



They chicks are always lying as close as possible to each other, heads down.

15 July 2010



By the 15 of July the soft part of the feathers had started to push through the quills. Now for the first time their heads and beaks were facing up – the beaks had wide yellow gapes at the base. Within another two days the chicks had swelled to completely fill the nest.

17 July 2010



The chicks have swelled to completely fill the nest

17 July 2010



Their eyes had opened.

18 July 2010



20 July 2010



One was bigger and was always on top but somehow he is the one being pushed out of the nest by his size. The littler one stayed snug in the base of the nest. This was not a case of the bigger bird shoving out the smaller one – rather the little one was just holding its place and the bigger one was growing too big for the nest.

21 July 2010



By the 21st of July the bigger one has left the nest, and come back. It is straining to hang onto the side of the nest trying to touch his fellow. The nest is starting to deform from the lopsided weight. The littler chick is still tucked away inside it.

22 July 2010



Mother

The next day when I went to check the nest, both parents were patrolling. Rather than being slightly worried when they saw me, chirping and trying to draw attention to themselves, they were being aggressive, flying by swiftly as if trying to push me away, their wings somehow snapping.



The bigger fledgling had flown fallen to the ground.

I lifted it up to put it back near the nest but it struggled away, and flew fell and landed sort of upside down on the ground. And lay still like a little ball. I tried to pick up and it wiggled so much that as I tried to help back on to this branch a few inches from the ground. During the day the parents continued to feed it, and protect it, and teach it. It climbed higher and higher until it could jump again and then it flew away with its mother.



Mean while, the father continued to feed, protect, and watch over the smaller one.

23 July 2010



By the 23rd of July, the fledgling was perched on the edge of the nest looking fit but tiny!

24 July 2010



The next day the nest was empty.