

generated January 2026

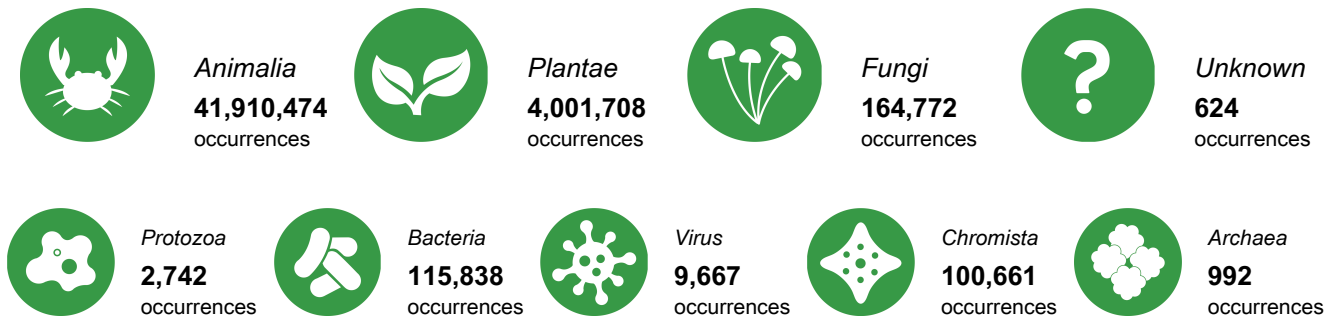
South Africa

This report provides a series of summary charts, statistics and other details about the mobilization and use of open-access species data through the GBIF network, relating to users and participating institutions in South Africa. These metrics show status at the time of report generation, unless otherwise noted. Taken together, the elements of this report can help guide and measure progress toward the information needs for biodiversity research, as well as for national commitments on biodiversity and sustainable development.

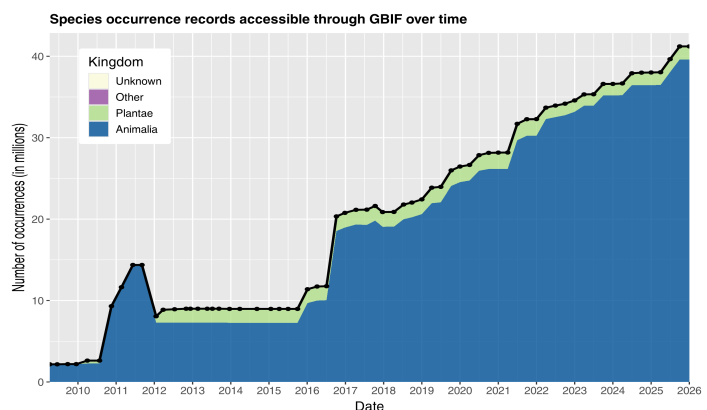
► Access and usage



► Data availability in South Africa



► Data mobilization

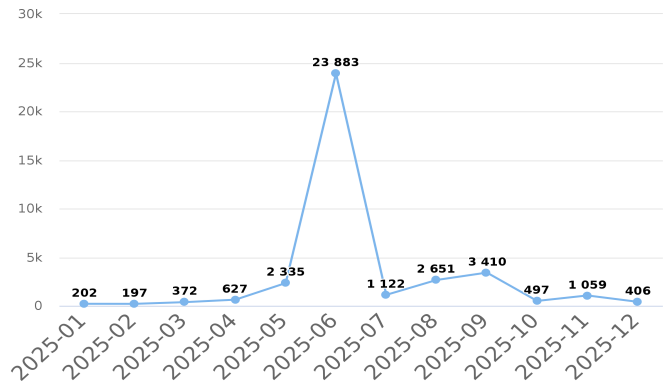
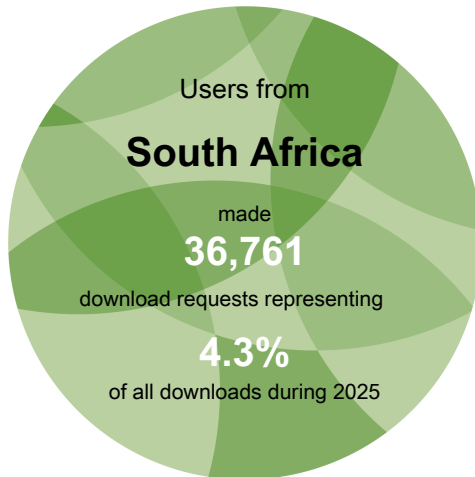


Number of records published by institutions in South Africa, categorized by kingdom



Access and usage

Data downloads on GBIF.org from users in South Africa



Monthly downloads requested by users in South Africa

Recent peer-reviewed articles using GBIF-mediated data by co-authors based in South Africa

The GBIF Secretariat maintains and reports on an ongoing literature tracking programme, giving priority to substantive uses of GBIF-mediated data in peer-reviewed literature while identifying the countries or areas of the authors' institutional affiliations. The citations below represent the five most recent journal articles with at least one co-author from South Africa.

Those interested in assisting the Secretariat in identifying additional peer-reviewed uses of GBIF-mediated data may forward relevant citations to comms@gbif.org.

Williams, Muthama, Zhigila *et al.* (2025) Hybridization in the Cape flora: the case of *Ficinia lucida* (Cyperaceae). *South African Journal of Botany*.
<https://doi.org/10.1016/j.sajb.2025.07.046>

Muasya, Bello, du Preez *et al.* (2025) Refined generic and infrageneric classification of the Cape Psoraleeae clade (Fabaceae) – taxonomic studies in the phylogenomic era. *South African Journal of Botany*.
<https://doi.org/10.1016/j.sajb.2025.08.006>

Maturana, Bernal-Durán, Gañán *et al.* (2025) Bridging the Scotia Arc: Climate-Driven Shifts in Connectivity of the Freshwater Crustacean *Branchinecta gaini* in Sub-Antarctic and Antarctic Ecosystems. *Diversity and Distributions*.
<https://doi.org/10.1111/ddi.70049>

Seebens, Meyerson, Richardson *et al.* (2025) Biological invasions: a global assessment of geographic distributions, long-term trends, and data gaps. *Biological Reviews*.
<https://doi.org/10.1111/brv.70058>

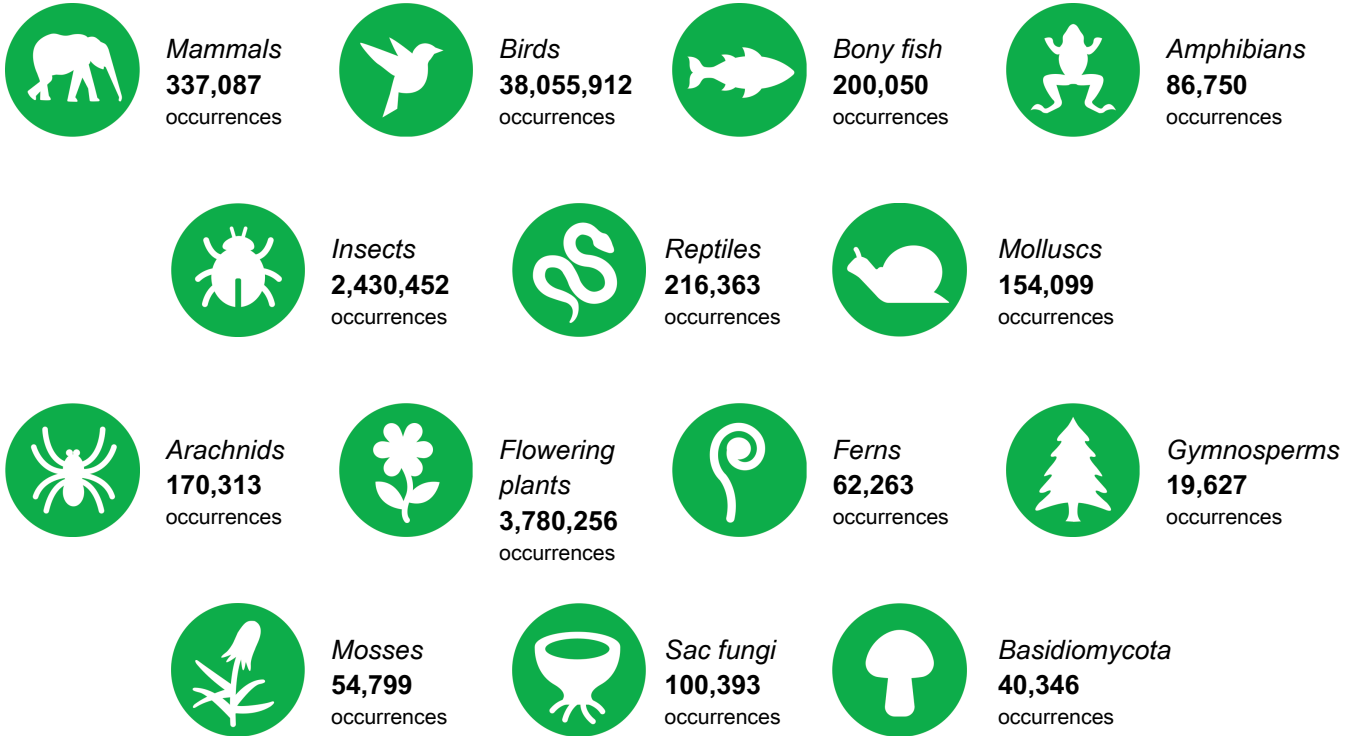
Raubenheimer, Zheng, Stefanski *et al.* (2025) Climate-change-driven shifts in C 3 and C 4 grass distributions and leaf traits could lead to changes in community-level flammability. *American Journal of Botany*.
<https://doi.org/10.1002/ajb2.70081>

See all research from this country or area
gbif.org/country/ZA/publications/from



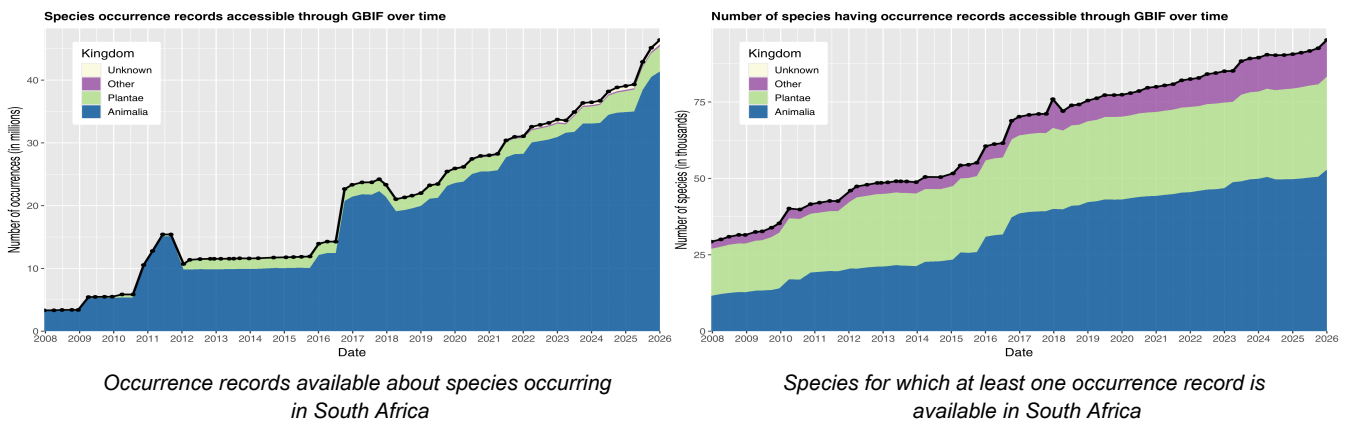
Data availability

Total data available for selected taxonomic groups in South Africa



Mammals = Class <i>Mammalia</i>	Insects = Class <i>Insecta</i>	Arachnids = Class <i>Arachnida</i>	Ferns = Phylum <i>Pteridophyta</i>
Birds = Class <i>Aves</i>	Reptiles = Class <i>Testudines</i> , <i>Sphenodontia</i> , <i>Squamata</i> & <i>Crocodylia</i>	Flowering plants = Phylum <i>Magnoliophyta</i>	Mosses = Phylum <i>Bryophyta</i>
Bony fish = Superclass <i>Osteichthyes</i> p.p.	Molluscs = Phylum <i>Mollusca</i>	Gymnosperms = Superclass <i>Gymnospermae</i>	Sac fungi = Phylum <i>Ascomycota</i>
Amphibians = Class <i>Amphibia</i>			Basidiomycota = Phylum <i>Basidiomycota</i>

Change over time in records about biodiversity in South Africa



WHY MIGHT THE AMOUNT OF MOBILIZED DATA DECREASE?

Datasets are sometimes removed by publishers, but more often decreases in the number of records are due to the removal of duplicate records and datasets.

SPECIES COUNTS represent the number of binomial scientific names for which GBIF has received data records, organized as far as possible using synonyms recorded in key databases like the Catalogue of Life



Most recent datasets from publishers in South Africa

South African National Species Checklist (Catalogue of Life in South Africa, COLSA). *Published by South African National Biodiversity Institute*
<https://doi.org/10.15468/sdptrh>

South African National Animal Checklist. *Published by South African National Biodiversity Institute*
<https://doi.org/10.15468/26drxg>

List of Alien Species in South Africa 2025. *Published by South African National Biodiversity Institute*
<https://doi.org/10.15468/vncky6>

South African National Plant Checklist (SANPC). *Published by South African National Biodiversity Institute*
<https://doi.org/10.15468/e8spft>

Skukuza Biological Reference Collection_Coleoptera dataset_1. *Published by South African National Parks*
<https://doi.org/10.15468/gs2c4s>

Skukuza Biological Reference Collection_Ornithology dataset. *Published by South African National Parks*
<https://doi.org/10.15468/jhrnek>

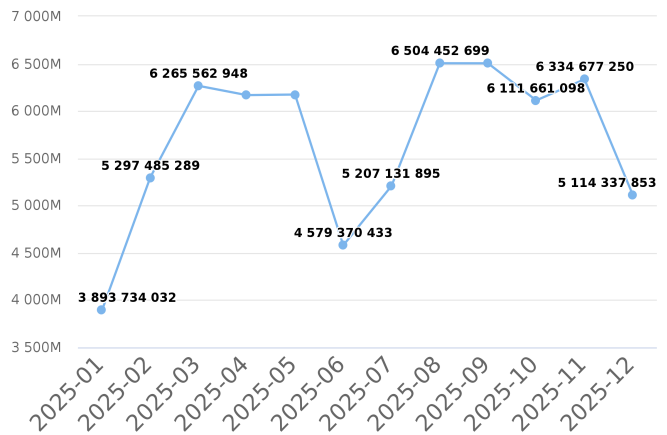
See all datasets from this country or area: gbif.org/dataset/search?publishing_country=ZA

Newest publishers from South Africa

- South African National Parks
- Freshwater Research Centre
- KwaZulu-Natal Museum
- FitzPatrick Institute of African Ornithology
- The South African Institute for Aquatic Biodiversity

See all publishers from this country or area
gbif.org/publisher/search?country=ZA

Occurrence records downloaded from GBIF.org, published by institutions in South Africa

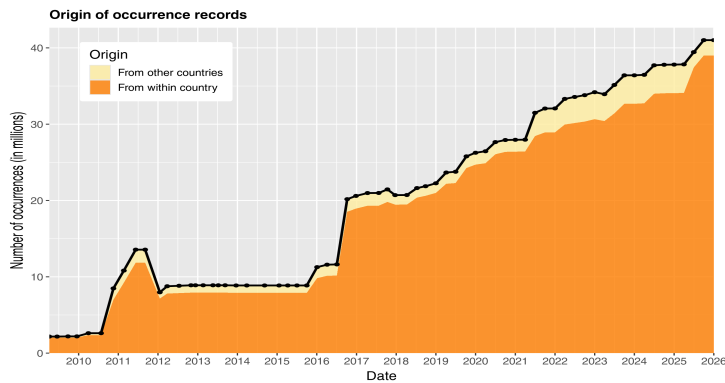


Number of occurrence records downloaded via GBIF.org published by institutions in South Africa

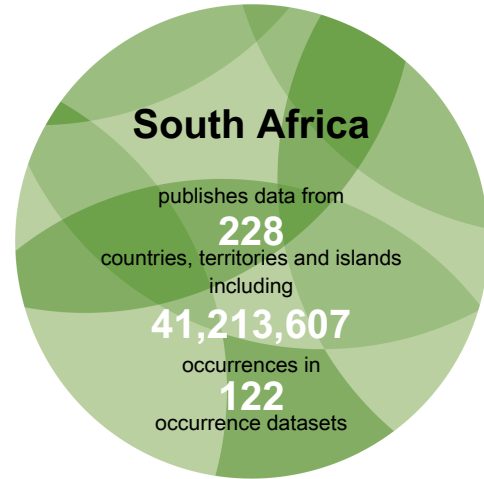


Data mobilization

Data sharing with country or area of origin by national institutions in South Africa



Data sharing with country or area of origin



The chart above shows the number of records shared over time by publishers within South Africa, with separate colours for records about species occurring within undefined and those occurring elsewhere.

Top data contributors about biodiversity in South Africa

Rank	Country or area	No. of occurrences
1	South Africa	39,004,512
2	United States of America	3,582,827
3	United Kingdom	1,093,676
4	Netherlands	1,015,409
5	International organization or unknown country	852,883
6	Belgium	259,859
7	Germany	142,940
8	Sweden	113,970
9	Estonia	81,543
10	France	62,357

Table 1. Ranking of countries or areas contributing data about South Africa

Top datasets contributing data about South Africa

Southern African Bird Atlas Project 2. *21,940,330 occurrences in South Africa.* (Last updated 18 Nov 2025)

EOD – eBird Observation Dataset. *7,508,540 occurrences in South Africa.* (Last updated 29 Oct 2025)

Southern African Bird Atlas Project. *4,845,186 occurrences in South Africa.* (Last updated 17 Nov 2025)

iNaturalist Research-grade Observations. *3,189,291 occurrences in South Africa.* (Last updated 31 Dec 2025)

SAFRING: Historical Bird Ringing Records (2005-2009). *1,755,753 occurrences in South Africa.* (Last updated 22 Nov 2017)

See all contributing countries and areas or datasets: gbif.org/country/ZA/about



South Africa participates in the following projects coordinated by GBIF

GBIF Africa Nodes data mobilization, ecological niche modelling and data paper training and mentorship

Capacity Enhancement Support Programme, 2015–2016

This project is centred on providing practical training on ecological niche modelling and the preparation of data papers to participants from up to 10 nodes in Africa using real datasets for threatened or invasive species to be published to the GBIF network.

<https://www.gbif.org/project/82204>

Cross-continental partnership to investigate data mining approaches for impactful data use cases and stories

Capacity Enhancement Support Programme, 2022–2023

<https://www.gbif.org/project/CESP2022-005>

Mobilizing endemic and economically useful species data for policy and protection

Capacity Enhancement Support Programme, 2020–2021

Technical training for data managers at key institutions to ensure the availability of data for target species

<https://www.gbif.org/project/2du1KSeBHxIczF9krfPZvp>

Engaging academia to unlock access to biodiversity data in southern Africa

Capacity Enhancement Support Programme, 2018–2019

This project will trial a data management and data publication short-course tailored to university students and their lecturers within the Southern African Development Community (SADC) region.

<https://www.gbif.org/project/2MNIZMf30AEGOu0SOYEcGO>

See all GBIF projects
[gbif.org/resource/search?contentType=project](https://www.gbif.org/resource/search?contentType=project)