To successfully conserve this ecosystem type, it is critically important that an understanding of suitable management practices are developed and then implemented. UKZN Researchers are carrying out a wide range of studies within KZN Sandstone Sourveld; this includes research into invertebrate genetic diversity using novel techniques like DNA barcoding. They are also investigating the impacts of development pressure, how neighbouring communities can sustainability benefit from these grasslands in terms of the ecosystem services that they provide and their economic value. The programme is also attempting to understand how the ecology of KZN Sandstone Sourveld will be impacted by climate change. A flagship project involves the tracking of crowned eagles (*Stephanoaetus coronatus*) to better understand their survival rates within an urban metro, their foraging behaviour and the value of the Durban Municipal Open Space System (D’MOSS). This also includes an analysis of prey items taken to nests, and is likely to result in a live webcam being used to publicise the programme.
The development of research partnerships between local governments and their academic institutions represents a win-win situation where the power of research institutions can be harnessed to develop both capacity and knowledge that is useful to the local government, and in this case, is being used to generate knowledge to combat the impacts of climate change within an ecosystem based adaptation framework.