



### CONTENTS

|                                 |                                                                                   |           |
|---------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------|
| THOMSON N                       | Editorial                                                                         | <b>1</b>  |
| DEMASIUS E                      | Roberts<br>Geographical Variation of<br>Southern African Birds                    | <b>3</b>  |
| FRIEDERICH G                    | A Zambian Birding<br>Experience – Part 3                                          | <b>6</b>  |
| KOLBERG H                       | Summary of the 2012<br>Ringing Year in Namibia                                    | <b>16</b> |
| DEMASIUS E                      | Cuckoo – African or<br>Common?                                                    | <b>19</b> |
| KOLBERG H                       | Trends in Namibian<br>Waterbird Populations 9 : Waders and<br>Shorebirds – Part 3 | <b>21</b> |
| BARTLEWSKI S                    | Some Conservation<br>Efforts in other Countries                                   | <b>27</b> |
| SKINNER G                       | Birding Central and<br>Northern Namibia –<br>10 to 20 October 2012                | <b>28</b> |
| KOLBERG H                       | Summary of the<br>2012 Winter Wetland Bird Counts<br>in Namibia                   | <b>34</b> |
| THOMSON N                       | Colour Rings on<br>Sociable Weavers                                               | <b>34</b> |
| AN APPEAL BY TREVOR<br>HARDAKER |                                                                                   | <b>35</b> |

|                                          |           |
|------------------------------------------|-----------|
| ATLAS UPDATE                             | <b>36</b> |
| RARITIES AND INTERESTING<br>OBSERVATIONS | <b>37</b> |

### Editorial

Normally I would have been tempted to devote a good part of the editorial space to another two species which have allegedly turned up in the northwest of Namibia. These birds were allegedly seen by one of the region's top birders but the validity of these claims appears to be in doubt and hopefully I will obtain more information and will be in a better position to comment in a future edition.

However, my editorial comment concerning previous sightings of Black Skimmers in Southern Africa (Lanioturdus 46 (1)) seems to have raised some lively debate and I think it is only right to conclude this issue now.

I published Tony Tree's response in Lanioturdus 46(2) and this has in turn solicited a response from Joris Komen which I am reproducing here. I am going along with Joris's closing remark that this matter should now be put to rest and I will not publish any further correspondence on this matter.

Joris's response reads:-

*purple glossed* photographed at Mahangu Safari Lodge.

Malachite Kingfishers occur along our perinneeal rivers but they differ significantly in colouration from the Malachites occurring further south and east of Namibia in that “ours” has a white chest and belly compared to the darker underparts of the other two races.



*Corythornis cristatus longirostris* with white chest and belly photographed on the Okavango River, Mahango Game Reserve.



*C c cristatus* with darker chest and lower belly but paler than in *canostigma* photographed at Zinkwazi Lagoon, KwaZulu Natal.

However, the Common Fiscal and Rüppell’s Korhaan drew my attention:

The book indicates a number of races of the Common Fiscal in Namibia with *Lanius collaris capelli* in the north without the clear white supercilium,

something I have not yet encountered. All my Etosha photographs of the Common Fiscal show a clear white supercilium and the same applies to the southern race, *L c collaris*, which is indicated to occur south of Keetmanshoop.

Rüppell’s Korhaan has two races, *Eupodotis rueppellii rueppellii* in the north being described with *paler brown back and whiter belly*, whilst *E r fitzsimonsi* appears with *a pale white breast*. I could also not detect these differences on any of my Rüppell’s Korhaan photographs.

Defenitely something to keep the eyes wide open for.

I believe this book is a welcome addition to our range of bird books, it widens the scope of birding and will no doubt be a constant companion of mine in the bush.

### **A Zambian Birding Experience Trip 3 – 6 July 2012 (Part 3)**

Günther Friederich  
[bateleur@iway.na](mailto:bateleur@iway.na)

with input from  
Nick Buys and Katy Sharpe  
[tutwasafaris@mweb.com.na](mailto:tutwasafaris@mweb.com.na)  
Jutta Surèn

In Part 2, a report was given about the second leg of the first organized trip to develop a birding route into south western Zambia. This trip was lead by “Caprivi Birding Safaris/Tutwa Tourism and Travel”, sponsored by “Birding Africa”. Three participants from the Namibia Bird Club joined. Nick Buys and Katy Sharpe were the guides; the participants Günther Friederich (author of this article), Jutta Surèn and Werner von Maltzahn.

**Thursday, 5<sup>th</sup> July 2012**

That morning “Fillemon” was up early again, starting the fire. One of the locals who had been appointed as “kitchen engineer”, turned up to do the cleaning. Katy fixed the morning coffee, the last decent one, after that we reverted to the “plastic” issue. While we were having a bite to eat the birds we had seen the day before came in and had a last glance at those “creatures” that had disturbed their peace.

Breaking up camp was the next thing to do. We managed that in a reasonable time and left the campsite at 09h00. We made a stop at Mutelo Village, met the guide, Agnita, for a last chat and a remark in her guestbook. I am of the opinion that Agnita is on the right track. She however needs equipment and proper training. She needs to do birding on her own, start learning bird habits and memorize calls. We paid our last respects to the Collared Palm-Thrushes; we managed to get some photographs. I offered an invitation to them to visit us in Grootfontein – we have some nice tall Washingtonia palms in the yard where they could stay, with some bush babies as neighbours.

Off we went, this time taking the “wet road” back to our destination, shown the way by a Bateleur above. The track was good to negotiate, sandier, sometimes crossing wide shallow depressions. The direction of travel? - I don't know - we had to rely on Nick with his GPS. Jutta had decided to expel Werner from her vehicle, sending him to take a turn with Nick and myself. Frequent stops presented Golden-tailed Woodpecker, Marico Flycatcher ... We passed through some villages. At one of those the track forked – left or right? Nick took right. Are you sure? Those tracks might (will – he hoped) meet again. They did (sigh of relief).

In the track – a korhaan thing, larger than Red-crested : a male Black-bellied Bustard. Before Katy and Werner could catch up, it disappeared in the tall grasses next to the track. A sweep gave no result. A short distance further on however, another one, the female. It stayed long enough for all of us to see it.

By now we were in a large open field covered with tall grass, which was being cut down by the locals. It took time trying to identify some birds.



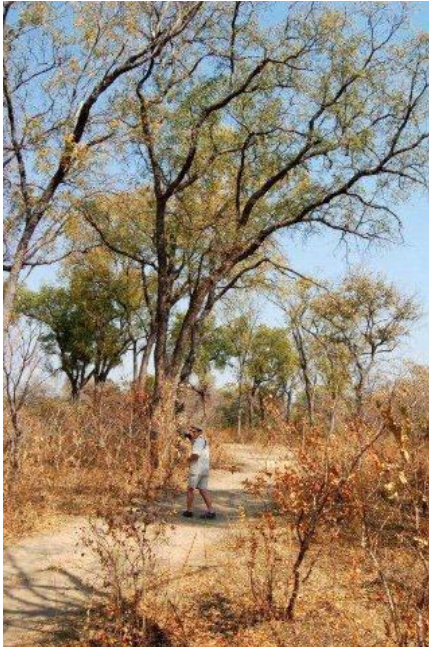
Grass field

We had left the Mopane woodland behind us some time ago, moving through mixed Acacia woodland. We passed through yet another village and stopped in a depression: Crested Barbet, African Hoopoe, a Red-billed Oxpecker, some Black-cheeked Lovebirds in the trees. They were out of their normal habitat. Was this an extension of their known range, or were they on a feeding trip?





The habitat changed again into broad-leaved, open woodlands. Nick remarked that we were entering patches of



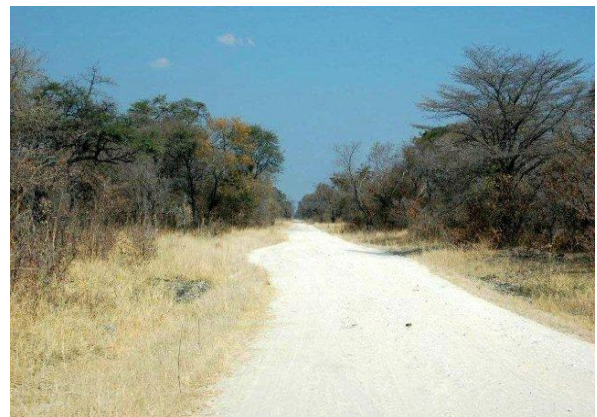
Miombo woodland. Trees were very tall; many of them I recognized from my tree-atlasing activities. A raptor overhead made us stop : Tawny Eagle. Under a large, slender tree I found pods. What was that? I did not know. Katy could help me out on that : Scotsman's Rattle - *Amblygonocarpus andongensis*.



I also found my Kalahari woodland special, sorry – a tree, not a bird: Hornpod Tree - *Diplorhynchus condylocarpon*. Nice names – those. These trees are sensitive to veld-fires, therefore mostly found as shrubs. But when in flower, they have a beautiful appearance. This patch of Miombo made us do a quick scan, there just might be some birds around which normally appear further north. We saw Tropical Boubou, heard Chinspot Batis calling.

At last we reached a gravel road (road???) which we had to take to the south towards Katima Mulilo. To the north was the place or town called Mulobezi, where a saw-mill had once been in operation. A power line ran next to this road. Because this saw-mill was no longer operating, the gravel road was in a bad state of decay. Nick had to open his “excuses bag” once more to search for the appropriate excuse. But it seemed the only ones left were “sorry”.

The road was really bad – ditches, dongas, deep dry tracks from heavy vehicles. Nick managed as best as he could, top speed 30 km/h on “good” stretches, then hitting the brakes once more. We recorded Meyer's Parrot and Dark Chanting Goshawk on the way. Near a village we had to get out of the vehicle, there were some Crowned Hornbills flying overhead into the trees at a village.



Gravel road Lipumpu to Mulobezi

After having passed Lipumpu village (town?), we came across the Luanga River, also a semi-perennial one. There were still patches of open, shallow water which we scanned for birds. A single Greater Flamingo was out of place, the White Stork should also not have been here. We had to wait for Katy and Werner; they were way back. We turned back to search for them, but they had observed another encounter which had kept them busy. They had seen a young Dark Chanting Goshawk trying to get a meal in the form of one or other species of spurfowl.

Turning our attention back to the water, we recorded Grey Heron, Red-billed Teal, African Jacana, Pied & Brown-hooded Kingfisher, Hamerkop, African Fish-Eagle and a Lizard Buzzard. This was the only time I put my spotting scope into operation. At last I saw my small wader (Teddybear), which I had missed so far - a Three-banded Plover in the shallows.



Flamingo

The gravel road was in a better state now; we could make more speed. At 14h00 we hit the tarmac Livingstone – Katima Mulilo road. The border posts were no problem, we were back in Katima Mulilo at 15h00. Before dropping us off, our guides made a pass at the refuse dump – no vultures, but a lot of Marabou Storks and some Pied Crows. In Katima Mulilo town, in a Jackalberry tree *Diospyros mespilliformes* some Shalow's Turacos

searched for something to eat. We were dropped off at Caprivi Houseboat Safari Lodge, had something to eat and settled in. Nick and Katy would later return for the evening boat cruise on the Zambezi. In the meantime I got the camera battery onto the charger and had a decent (cold) shower.



Sunset on the Zambezi

Close to sunset we boarded the “Stream Liner” (not a nutshell), Curt being the skipper. We experienced a beautiful sunset over the Zambezi. There was still enough light to see Kingfishers, an African Fish-Eagle on a tree close to us, African Openbill, White-fronted Bee-eater, African Yellow White-eye, Reed Cormorant, Tropical Boubou, African Goshawk, African Skimmer, Hadedda Ibis and Water Thick-knee. This one I remember having seen for the first time on the Kunene River in May 1998. The excitement of that sighting caused me to finish a can of OBS (a big one – those of you who know what that is) in celebration. I had never seen this bird at the vleis on the farm.

As it was getting darker we turned to an island in the river, where Pel's Fishing-Owl had been seen the previous evening. We disturbed some Helmeted Guineafowl off their night perch. A Purple Heron on the banks. It was dark by then, the searchlight was turned on and the trees on the riverbank scanned. Just above water level, between some branches, we found a juvenile female African Finfoot, a special for all of us.



Blinded by the search light, it stayed in its night roost; we had a close look at it. The same with the White-backed Night-Heron. It stepped around at its spot on the riverbank, not being able to move anywhere. This might not be the ideal way to search for birds ... But still no Pel's. We turned back for another scan. And then! There! In the upper branches, a blink in the searchlight. That must be it! Yes! Closer! Excitement! And there it was, high up in the tree: some fisherman's lost fishing lure! Nice owl. The genet we saw after that was no consolation. Bloody lure!!

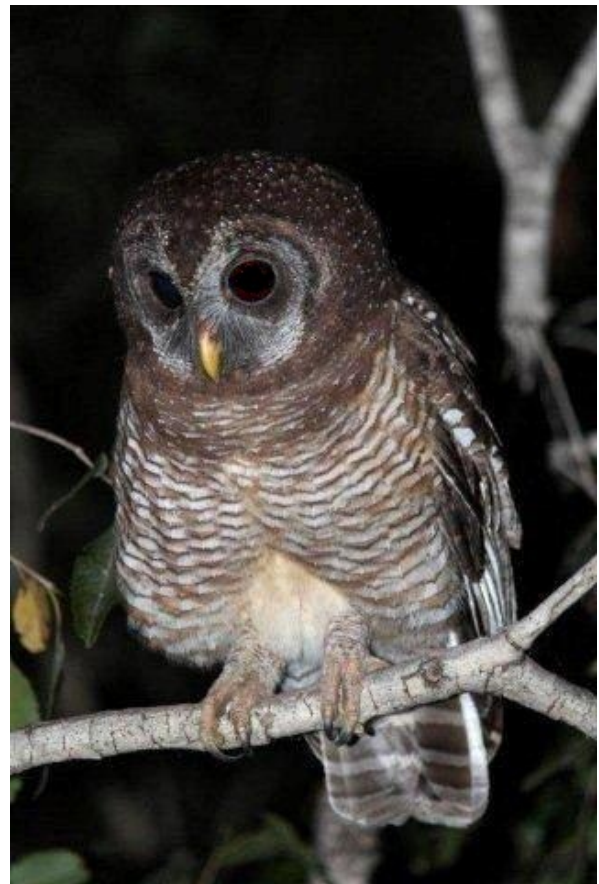


African Finfoot



White-backed Night-Heron

We got our consolation for the missed Fishing-Owl back at the Lodge. In full close view, at deck height perched in the tree, were two African Wood-Owls. They frequently dove down to the riverbank, which was floodlit, to pick up a morsel – insects or whatever. They were habituated to people and would not be disturbed very much.



African Wood-Owl

With these photographs of the owls my camera chip was full, intelligently I had left the big chip at home. I had to “make a plan” the next day, and quickly. We settled down for a delightful dinner. Full of emotions of the day's experiences, we turned in. There would be more of that – birding around the Katima Mulilo area the following morning.

### **Friday, 6<sup>th</sup> July 2012**

Nick picked Jutta, Werner and myself up the following morning after breakfast. Still within the town perimeters a flowering Worm-cure *Albizia Albizia antelminthica* held us up for a while. Purple-banded –, White-bellied – and Marico Sunbirds were collecting nectar on this early flowering tree. On the road towards Kongola we turned off onto a gravel road. Nick knew where we could find Arnot's Chat. Sweeping the forest we saw Meyer's

Parrot, Southern Black Tit, Golden-tailed Woodpecker, Yellow-fronted Tinkerbird, Chinspot Batis and others. Eventually we had the “wanted” bird close to the road, giving us a good view.



Arnot's Chat

We carried on to the Kalizo Lodge area – Red-billed Oxpecker, Tawny Eagle, Hamerkop. Close to Kalimbeza Village we met a bird party on the ground next to the road, which kept us for a while. Blue Waxbill, Red-billed Firefinch, African Mourning Dove, Shaft-tailed Whydah, Tawny-flanked Prinia were feeding between the short grasses. A Crimson-breasted Shrike made its appearance. We had not seen this bird in Zambia; apparently it does not occur there. However, when we were on the December 2002 solar eclipse trip at the Kwando River, Singalamwe area, we had birded the border with Zambia. There, at a waterhole, just a few paces inside Zambia, I had made sure that I had a Crimson-breasted Shrike in front of me in the shrubs, for all to see. Ilse Mwanza from the Zambian Ornithology Society, who had joined the group, remarked there that this was then the first record of Crimson-breasted Shrike for Zambia.

On the way towards Island View we saw Pied Kingfisher, Cattle Egret, Magpie Shrike and White-browed Robin-Chat, amongst others. We searched for a way down to the river. Some accesses had been closed due to agricultural activities. A rice cultivating project was electrically fenced off for protection against marauding elephants.

A bird flew overhead – what was that? We dashed out of the vehicle and tried to follow, but it had disappeared into the reeds. On the way back to the vehicle we had a Rufous-bellied Heron in front of us, between the reeds. We observed it catching and swallowing a small barbel. Back in the vehicle, Nick had just started releasing the clutch – Stop! In this bush, just 3 metres away! An African Pygmy-Kingfisher! It was sitting undisturbed, giving us enough time for some photographs. For Nick this also was the first of this species in this area although he had always suspected it to be around. However, although it is a fairly common breeding intra-African migrant, present from September to as late as early June, this was really a special sighting in early July.



African Pygmy-Kingfisher

In the meantime Werner had found something else. In a tree (sorry – this time I don't know which), patched to the



Lesser Striped Swallow nest



underside of a thick branch was a swallow's nest. Lesser Striped Swallows were active around this tree; they were self-employed in the construction business – a bit early for the season?

By way of a bumpy, deep, dry, elephant spoor infested track we reached a side-arm of the Zambezi. In the shallows Hamerkops were in mating display, with a Squacco Heron and African Jacana keeping supervision. An African Marsh-Harrier hovered above and dipped into the reeds. Hey, what's that over there in the distance? Binoculars up: bloody cow!

The Black-chested Snake-Eagle at last made its appearance over the floodplains. We had had none of these on the trip yet. On our way back we passed a large Baobab tree *Adansonia digitata*. Past it Werner advised Nick to come to a stop, there was another raptor in that tree. It took some time of studying to decide this was a sub-adult Western Banded Snake-Eagle, another raptor we had not seen so far on this trip.

On the outskirts of Katima Mulilo we had a Red-necked Falcon. A short distance on, pandemonium erupted. A raptor had taken off from the road verge on the left and flown low over the vehicle into a tree to the right. We dashed out of the vehicle. In the tree – another Western Banded Snake-Eagle, adult, caught on the job: a cobra in its talons! However it would not let us disturb it with its one and a half metre long meal and flew off before we could get a camera ready.

We arrived at Katy's place, at the former fish farm, where we had a late brunch. The surroundings appeared good for birding – a relatively untidy garden, densely overgrown in places, just the right habitat for birds. And they were all over the place: Black-backed Puffback, Sunbirds, Yellow-breasted

Apalis, Red-billed Firefinch, Cardinal and Golden-tailed Woodpecker. A Sacred Coral-tree, *Erythrina lysistemon* was in flower, other trees too, which attracted nectar feeders. Jutta had difficulties getting the African Yellow White-eye into view.

By now it was time to pack up and go. Jutta had a flight to catch to Windhoek, Werner and I had some kilometres to cover to Shamvura Camp on the Okavango. At the Tutwa Office we loaded our gear, exchanged digital photos, took a group photo of the participants of this trip, said our good-byes and left for our different destinations.

Werner's and my journey was uneventful. At Kongola Bridge we scanned the reed beds – nothing special to see. Werner took the steering wheel, so that I could pay more attention to the vegetation. Just past Kongola we saw a herd of female kudu. About 30 km from Divundu – just a single young roan antelope which was observing the traffic from close to the road. But it didn't like being observed itself, so it did a disappearing act. A short distance on, about fifteen elephants, some youngsters amongst them, kept us for a while. Not yet up to speed again, another three elephants to the right and one to the left, held us up once more.



Heya ! – howzit ?

The single one kept us in his sight while being photographed; he even waved his



“heya” greetings towards us with his trunk, whilst demolishing this small shrub, pushing it in between his molars.

Again, no proper speed yet achieved, another elephant close on the right. This one was not impressed with us at all, checked on us once, decided these creatures in that rolling box-thing are not worth an investigation, and kept moving along the road.



No big thing

Why this sudden overpopulation of elephants? I checked the GPS – the Okavango River was just some three kilometres away, that’s why. All those cute hold-ups had had their drinks earlier. Oh yeah, not to forget about the old Red-headed Weaver nest in a Shepherd’s Tree *Boscia albitrunca*, along the road, to which Werner drew my attention when we made a stop.

Past Divundu we had to worry about fuel, the tank was close to empty, not like E- for Enough. However, before we found a place to turn off to refuel, we were forced off the road. Generally it is not advisable to travel with a flat tyre. Werner did the tyre-job, I refueled. We arrived at Shamvura in the dark. Some discussions and comments on our trip followed. We turned in early.

We had decided there would not be a boat trip the following morning, Saturday. In Rundu we had that tube patched and carried on towards home. At 13h00 we were back in Grootfontein.

Werner’s wife had also arrived by then. No big conversations, they still had a trip towards Otavi. Goodbye, thank you for the company, it was great!

### Birdlist Third Leg

Green Wood-Hoopoe  
Collared Palm-Thrush  
Red-billed Firefinch  
Blue Waxbill  
African Grey Hornbill  
Giant Kingfisher  
Green-backed Heron  
Golden-tailed Woodpecker  
Bateleur  
Senegal Coucal  
Marico Flycatcher  
Black-bellied Bustard  
Black-crowned Tchagra  
Brown-crowned Tchagra  
Swallow-tailed Bee-eater  
Black-cheeked Lovebird  
Crested Barbet  
Red-billed Oxpecker  
White-browed Scrub-Robin  
African Hoopoe  
Tawny Eagle  
Chinspot Batis  
Tropical Boubou  
Meyer’s Parrot  
Common Scimitarbill  
Crested Francolin  
Crowned Hornbill  
Dark Chanting Goshawk  
Red-billed Buffalo-Weaver  
Greater Flamingo  
Grey Heron  
Three-banded Plover  
Red-billed Teal  
Blacksmith Lapwing  
African Jacana  
Pied Kingfisher  
Brown-hooded Kingfisher  
Cattle Egret  
White Stork  
Lizard Buzzard  
Hamerkop  
Egyptian Goose  
Black-collared Barbet  
African Fish-Eagle  
(44 species)

## Back in Namibia

Marabou Stork  
Pied Crow  
Schalow's Turaco  
African Green-Pigeon  
Dark-capped Bulbul  
African Pied Wagtail  
Burchell's Starling  
African Openbill  
White-fronted Bee-eater  
African Yellow White-eye  
Cape Turtle-Dove  
Giant Kingfisher  
Southern Masked-Weaver  
Pied Kingfisher  
Little Egret  
White-breasted Cormorant  
African Fish-Eagle  
Reed Cormorant  
Tropical Boubou  
African Goshawk  
African Skimmer  
Green-backed Heron  
Rufous-bellied Heron  
Hadedda Ibis  
Fork-tailed Drongo  
Malachite Kingfisher  
Water Thick-knee  
Helmeted Guineafowl  
Purple Heron  
White-backed Night-Heron  
African Finfoot  
African Wood-Owl  
Purple-banded Sunbird  
White-bellied Sunbird  
Marico Sunbird  
Southern Black Tit  
Yellow-fronted Tinkerbird  
Arnot's Chat  
Lilac-breasted Roller  
Red-billed Oxpecker  
Lesser Striped Swallow  
Magpie Shrike  
Crowned Lapwing  
White-browed Robin-Chat  
Crimson-breasted Shrike  
Blue Waxbill  
Red-billed Firefinch  
African Mourning Dove  
Shaft-tailed Whydah  
Tawny-flanked Prinia

Red-billed Hornbill  
Namaqua Dove  
White-browed Coucal  
Black-shouldered Kite  
Laughing Dove  
Little Grebe  
Little Bee-eater  
Hamerkop  
Squacco Heron  
Green-winged Pytilia  
African Pygmy-Kingfisher  
African Jacana  
Rattling Cisticola  
Red-billed Buffalo-Weaver  
African Marsh-Harrier  
Red-billed Teal  
Black-chested Snake-Eagle  
Hartlaub's Babbler  
Zitting Cisticola  
Red-necked Falcon  
Western Banded Snake-Eagle  
Bearded Woodpecker  
Collared Sunbird  
Black-backed Puffback  
Wattled Starling  
Yellow-breasted Apalis  
Wire-tailed Swallow  
Scarlet-chested Sunbird  
Cardinal Woodpecker  
Village Weaver  
Bradfield's Hornbill  
Brown-crowned Tchagra

(82 species)

## Results of this trip (Statistics):

### In Zambia:

|                                |     |
|--------------------------------|-----|
| Total records:                 | 272 |
| Total species recorded:        | 171 |
| Total species recorded 3 legs: | 251 |

|                                   |    |
|-----------------------------------|----|
| <u>In Namibia:</u> Total records: | 82 |
| Total species:                    | 82 |

|                                                           |     |
|-----------------------------------------------------------|-----|
| <u>For myself:</u> Species (all new) recorded for Zambia: | 171 |
| Lifers:                                                   | 17  |
| Lifers for Namibia:                                       | 5   |
| Total Lifers:                                             | 22  |



The totals do not seem exceptionally high; I had expected this. Of the bird species on the list supplied before the trip, I had recorded about 90% of them already somewhere in Namibia, many of them on the farm, especially the wetland species. However, as I had never done any birding around Katima Mulilo, let alone Zambia, it was a challenge for me to go there, in the knowledge that I would see some lifers. Those I that did eventually see were absolutely worth the while.

This does not count for Zambia. This was a new country for me and I see this as such: A very good variety of bird species and more than a few specials. If I have to name a few special lifers for myself, see the list hereunder.

And all this thanks to the outstanding guidance of Katy and Nick. A very big thanks and compliments to you both!!

Lifers recorded (in recorded order):

White-crowned Lapwing  
African Yellow White-eye  
African Mourning Dove  
Tropical Boubou (When I hear those, or Swamp Boubou calling, I know I am where I like to be)  
Bearded Scrub-Robin  
Red-billed Firefinch  
Lizard Buzzard (Another raptor species which is special for me in the raptor family)  
Lesser Swamp-Warbler  
White-backed Duck (A species I have not recorded on the farm (Tsutsab Vlei))  
Black-headed Oriole (Just because it's so showy – like the African Golden Oriole)  
Northern Grey-headed Sparrow  
Black-cheeked Lovebird (The one we had gone for)  
Grey-headed Bush-Shrike  
White-browed Coucal  
African Broadbill (A scarce bird which presented itself unexpectedly)

Black-bellied Bustard  
Crowned Hornbill  
Shalow's Turaco (A showy bird not expected)  
African Finfoot (Dreamt about this one for a long time, with all our visits to the Okavango)  
Arnot's Chat  
African Pygmy-Kingfisher (Just cute in its size)  
Collared Sunbird

All in all: This was a great, memorable event for all us participants. The opportunity of visiting a new birding area in another country was extraordinary for me. The highlight of the trip, although we had gone for the Black-cheeked Lovebird, was definitely the African Broadbill.

The trip had been organized exceptionally well. Everything had been catered for. The primitive camping facilities at the Muchile River were just perfect. The guidance was as one would expect. Without this we could not have registered so many bird species. When necessary, we worked as a team; nobody was out of the group. Great companionship.

A very big, hearty thank you and compliments to Katy and Nick for all their efforts in making this trip an absolute success. For anybody interested in visiting this area, these are the guides I can recommend with trust.

Conclusion: The areas we visited definitely have potential as birding destinations. The Simungoma IBA is no problem, the infrastructure is in place. For birding to pick up there, the lodge operators in this area should be made aware of this potential and cater for birders. It appeared to me that those lodges cater mostly for fishing. One problem we had on the Zambezi was the "boat operator" talking on his cell phone while we were attempting to find birds.

This should be dealt with. Those guides should be made aware of the requirements and get the necessary training to cater for birders. This also applies to the guide Brian at Simungoma IBA. He has to get the necessary equipment and professional training.

For the Muchile IBA: This is an area that is not so easy to access, especially in the rainy season. The area is still undisturbed and should stay as it is. A bit of upgrading could be done on the access "tracks", although they are adequate. Semi-permanent campsites could be established at the Muchile River, one for the "wet season", one for the "dry season". The guide Agnita is willing, but she will also need proper training and equipment. The shop owners at this village could benefit by stocking up on basic supplies for tourists. We wanted to take home some Zambian beer but there was none available.

### **Summary of the 2012 Ringing Year in Namibia**

Holger Kolberg  
Ministry of Environment and Tourism  
Windhoek  
(holgerk@mweb.com.na)

The year 2012 was once again a successful one in terms of bird ringing in Namibia.

15 100 Birds of 240 species were handled by 26 ringers; out of that total 10 826 were newly ringed (code 1) birds and the remainder were re-traps, controls etc. Ursula Franke tops the list with almost 3 500 birds, followed by Neil Thomson and Dirk Heinrich. Rian Jones is in fourth place with a huge number of controls (mainly penguins, cormorants and gannets) and this significant contribution to the study of

seabirds certainly deserves recognition. In terms of different species ringed, Dirk Heinrich is once again the master, followed by Neil and Ursula.

Lark-like Bunting tops the list of birds ringed, followed by African Penguin and Chestnut Weaver. These are the only species of which more than one thousand individuals were handled. Thanks to the efforts of a dedicated team of vulture ringers, two vulture species top the rankings for the birds of prey and the ubiquitous Southern Pale Chanting Goshawk fills third place. The contribution of the island dwellers is manifest in the list of sea/shore/wetland birds where African Penguins and Bank Cormorants take the two top spots, followed by Black Tern. Ten of Namibia's endemic species were ringed, totaling 95 birds. Damara Tern is on top of this list.

Not surprisingly, since there are two active resident ringers there, Rykvoet Street sits on top of the list of localities. This is followed by Mercury Island and the Mile 4 Saltworks.

Several long-term ringing projects continued in 2012. The vulture ringing project in Etosha, the Namib and on farms once again resulted in a large number of chicks being ringed and fitted with patagial tags. The Braby family continued their monitoring of Damara Tern breeding around Swakopmund. Unfortunately this project ran out of funding halfway through the season and it is hoped that a new funding source can be found before the next breeding season so that this important project can continue. Mark Boorman continued his tern study at the Mile 4 Saltworks but this project may also soon come to an end because of light pollution from the encroaching northern suburbs of Swakopmund.

Many thanks to all the Namibian ringers who contribute to making us one of the