

SHORT NOTE

A first record for *Aloe buettneri*
in Southern Africa

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An *Aloe buettneri* was recently recorded for the first time in the northern part of South West Africa. In its distribution it has been found to be associated with *Colospermum mopane*.

The flowers were green-yellowish in colour and the globase basal swelling which is an unique feature for this species was quite apparent so that it was easy to identify the species as *A. buettneri*.

Taxonomically the species belongs to the section Bulbifomes, Christian, according to Reynold's (1966) classification for Tropical Africa. There are only four species with bulbs known in Africa, namely *A. buettneri*, *A. bullockii*, *A. richardsiae* from Tropical Africa and *A. kniphofioides* from South Africa. This new record means that *A. buettneri* is now also a South African aloe. As the plants were known to occur in Southern Angola, this new record from the north of South West Africa is not extraordinary. To safe-guard the plant from collectors no accurate locality description can be given. Its local distribution in South West Africa appears to correlate with Mopane Savanna Giess (1972), where they usually grow on seasonally waterlogged dark brown turf soils. The plants frequently grow in coppice-like stands of *Colophospermum mopane*.

Although the plant's growth form is similar to that of the other bulbous plants in the sense that the leaves dry back and disappear in the winter, no definite sign of a bulb was found in the cases where plants were uprooted. In comparison with the description given by Reynolds (1966) our specimens were slightly more robust in growth. In a comparison of measurements of the new record with those of Reynolds (1966) this fact was quite apparent.

Concerning the following morphologic features:

Leaves

In our case the longest leaves measured up to 80 cm and the broadest up to 19 cm compared with the longest leaves of 55 cm and 8 to 10 cm in width mentioned by Reynolds (1966).

Inflorescence

Normally the inflorescence branched into 3 to 5 branches and it reached an average length of between 70 and 90 cm. The author counted up to 12 branches and the maximum length of the inflorescence in one case was 144 cm.

Flowers

Only the green-yellowish form was observed. All the other measurements compared favourably with those in Reynolds (1966) and the globase basal swelling of

the flower is very apparent. This unique feature clearly identifies the species as *A. buettneri*.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

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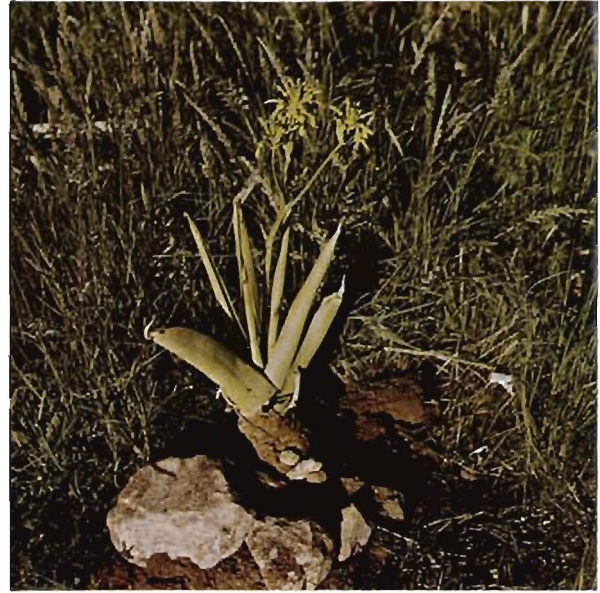


Plate 1. *Aloe buettneri*, flowering in the garden of the author.



Plate 2. The flowers of *Aloe buettneri*, note the prominent globase basal swelling, typical for the species.

SHORT NOTE

Miscellaneous notes on
South West African birds

by
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Since compiling the first short notes (Dixon 1970) a number of additional observations have been made.

1. ANOTHER RECORD OF THE
SIBERIAN RACE OF THE
WILLOW WARBLER FROM
SOUTH WEST AFRICA

Although the Willow Warbler is recorded as a common non-breeding migrant to Southern Africa records of the eastern *Phylloscopus trochilus yakutensis* Ticehurst from South West Africa are scarce. Winterbottom (1971) records it from Namutoni in the Etosha National Park while Clancey (1970) mentions it from the territory as well.

A specimen recently compared with material in the Durban Museum and attributable to *yakutensis* (Clancey pers. comm.) is held at the Namib Desert Research Station, Gobabeb. The specimen was taken by the writer on 29 October 1968 along the Omuhonga river in the Kaokoveld. This locality is some 400 km to the north west of Namutoni.

While this is then only the second specimen of this race to be taken it is probable that *yakutensis* enjoys a wider distribution in South West Africa than present records indicate.

2. PARADISE FLYCATCHER
TERSIPHONE VIRIDIS MULLER
FROM THE
NAMIB DESERT PARK

Winterbottom (1971) records the Paradise Flycatcher as far south as Dordabis. On 9 April 1971 an adult female of this species was observed in the Tumasberg region of the Namib Desert Park. This sighting is some 180 km to the west of the species known range. The bird was first seen at 18h30 fluttering and hawking around a small tree on a large boulder outcrop. This is the first record of this species from the Namib Desert Park where it may be considered a rare vagrant visitor.

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