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Editorial

The Namibia Bird Club is often accused of being the "Windhoek Bird Club" as most of our activities are centred around Windhoek. With this in mind the chairperson organized a camping long weekend at Farm Eileen to the west of Omaruru. This outing was attended by ten people including two of our Swakopmund members, Mark Boorman and Sandra Dantu. The weekend was used to atlas three pentads and to do a bit of ringing. The morning walks in Omaruru were widely publicized on various radio stations in the hope of attracting some local residents to join us and perhaps to become members of the bird club. This turned out to be wishful thinking as there was absolutely no response from Omaruru residents and nobody at all turned up at the publicized meeting points. No one can now say that we have not tried to involve others from outside of Windhoek.

After many above average rainy seasons it looks as if drought conditions have returned to central Namibia. I have been measuring

An Early Morning Hunting Episode

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Whenever I am in Halali I have to check up on “my” resident pair of Shikras. They bred successfully at the end of 2011 and at the beginning of December the chicks were flying but they still had to be fed.

Whilst on my early morning walk in mid May 2012 I heard the call of one of the Shikras. On closer inspection I found one of the juvenile birds sitting on a verandah chair looking quite happily at a tree squirrel on the floor. Nice, I thought, like in a story book, but no one other than I was around to appreciate such an idyllic moment just after sunrise.

But, as in real life, these idyllic moments last only for a very short time and the hard reality sets in; in this case a hectic chase started, obviously in order to satisfy one of the basic needs of any living organism and that is to have a substantial breakfast on the table!!



In a flash the Shikra was on the floor chasing the tree squirrel. Had it not been for the smooth floor surface and had the Shikra not slipped, a possible squirrel breakfast could have been served.



But the chase went on and relentlessly the Shikra gave chase



... one moment the Shikra gained ground ...



.. and then it was the squirrel that was faster.



Then it went up and down again....



... and eventually the tree squirrel found some refuge behind the air conditioner....



... and a pretty frustrated and no doubt still hungry Shikra left to find breakfast elsewhere.