

## CONTENTS

VOLUME 35 (4) 2002

OSBORNE, T. O. Editorial .....	1
BUTCHER, M. Blue Waxbills in Windhoek (continued) .....	2
ORCHARD, D. Contents of <i>The Babbler</i> .....	3
STEENKAMP, J. & BRIDGEFORD, P. Pale-winged Starling breeding in the Namib-Naukluft Park ....	5
FRIEDERICH, G. & FRIEDERICH, T. Melanistic Hornbill? .....	8
SIMMONS, R. E. Sandwich Harbour birds - April 2002 .....	10
SIMMONS, R. E. Quelea breeding in northeast Namibia, April 1999 .....	13
THIRION, G. Longcrested Eagle in Windhoek District .....	23
PAXTON, M & SHEEHAN, L. Mahango Bird Count January 2002 .....	24
PAXTON, M & SHEEHAN, L. Lake Liambezi, Caprivi Region, Waterbird Census 14 & 15 July 2001 .....	29
ERRATUM Figure 5. from SIMMONS & LLOYD. Sandgrouse: The biology behind conserving through sustainable use. <i>Lanioturdus</i> Vol. 35(3) 12-24. ....	34
STEYN, N. Visit to Gammams Water Works, Windhoek 15 September 2002	35
BIRD NOTES / OBSERVATIONS .....	35

## Editorial

Timothy O. Osborne

With this issue the *Lanioturdus* is now back to being a journal with 4 issues per year and I would like to congratulate the members for your support to make this happen. Within this issue is a wide diversity of articles from all parts of the country. Again we have articles on "common" garden birds which are not common according to the books.

I would like to apologize to Rob Simmons and Penn Lloyd for forgetting to include a figure in their article, which appeared in Volume 35(3). It is included in this issue.

We have only had 4 write-ups on bird club outings in Volume 35 from 2002 and I would like to appeal to organizers and members to please send me a short note on the outing. This will enable other members, who did not attend, to see what the club has been doing and what birds were seen.

Included within this issue is an extra membership form. Please give one to a keen birder you know, who is not a member. You may not know it, but the Namibia Bird Club only has about 90 members which is a rather shocking low number considering all the people we know who have an interest in birding in the country. If you just consider the number of tour guides operating that is more than 90 people. That does not count the number of hunting guides, farmers, scientists, and government employees who also either observe birds or do studies on birds. In 3 of our neighbouring countries Botswana, Zambia and Zimbabwe their bird clubs/societies have 300-600 members and have far less individuals who are active in the tourism or outdoor avocations.

## Visit to Gammams Water Works, Windhoek 15 September 2002

Nigel Steyn  
PO Box 5030 Windhoek  
nigelsteyn@hotmail.com

Obviously not many people were put off by the thought of visiting a sewage farm as we had a good turn out (13 people showed up), in fact we timed it just right, there was not even a hint of the distinctive aroma in the air. The new textile factory next door does not seem to have affected the bird life as yet, although the noise level was quite high. The total species count was exactly fifty, the highlights being 2 Greenbacked herons, 8 Blackcrowned night herons and 4 Hottentot teals.

### BIRD NOTES/OBSERVATIONS

All by T. O. Osborne

#### Bateleur

There appears to be more Bateleur eagles in the sky lately, which is good news for the endangered species. It quietly disappeared from the skies in southern Africa in the 1980's. Scientists and bird watchers noted that it was very scarce on roadside raptor counts and it was put on the red data list. The species even became rare in Zambia where it was once possible in the early 1970's to see one of these eagles in sight the whole drive from Livingstone to Lusaka 500 km. In late February 2002 I drove from Etosha NP to Rundu, Mahango and down the western side of the Okavango River to Maun. I saw about 70 Bateleur Eagles on the drive. The vast majority was immature birds, which was a good indication that the population is growing. Although it was February, which is the height of the breeding season, so some adults would be on the nest. I also noticed in

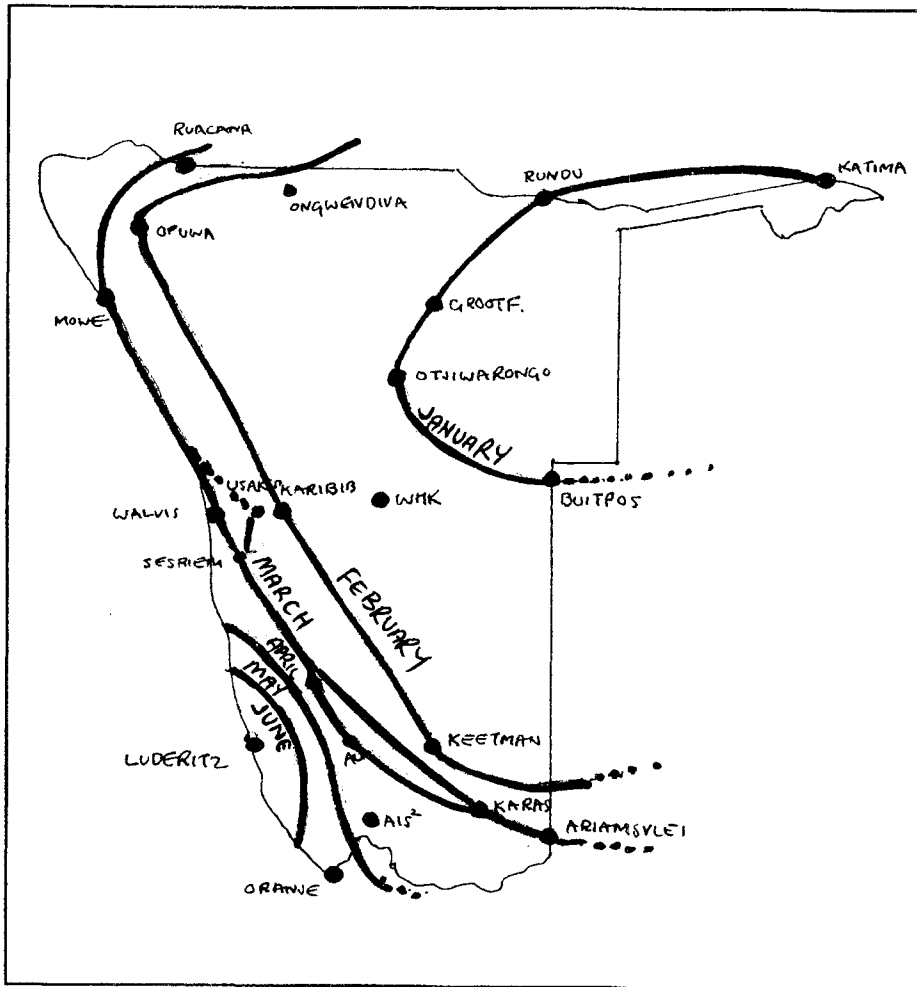


Fig. 5 Peak rainfall months by region throughout Namibia. Sources: Bernardi (1997; Kilian (1995)

#### Erratum

Figure 5 from SIMMONS, R & P. LLOYD. 2002

Sandgrouse: The biology behind conserving through sustainable use.

*Lanioturdus* Vol. 35 (3): 12-24

August and September 2002 Bateleur eagles flying between Okahandja and Otjiwarongo. Hopefully this acrobatic eagle has recovered in its core area and is now expanding to former range.

### **Pearl-spotted Owlet**

I observed a pair of these birds on 9 May 2002 trying to catch dassie rats *Petromus typicus*, which were coming to our rat feeding station. The owls were perched about 2.5 m above the rats in a White Syringa tree and were obviously very interested in the rats. One or both of the birds would fly down from their perch and swoop at the rats. The dassie rats would slowly run off to the cover of the rocks but would return to feed immediately. The owls swooped 5 times and then finally gave up. The owls are supposed to eat prey up to the size of squirrel but with the owl at 75 g and the rats at 200-300 grams the owl's eyes were bigger than their feet.

### **Lanner Falcon**

In January and February 2002 I noticed flocks of Lanners in Etosha NP. The literature notes that influxes of the falcons occur but it is not known where they come from. I tried to ring some of the birds but was unsuccessful. It is possible that the falcons come from eastern Zambia, Zimbabwe and Malawi where the birds nest on large granite koppies. During the rains the hunting would be difficult for the birds as the *Hyparrhenia* grass usually grows to 2 m which would hide their main prey, rodents. During the dry season when the bird breed, bush fires open up the areas below the koppies, which makes hunting easier. Most of the birds I saw were young of the year birds. At Sonderwater Farm, Outjo District I saw a flock of 4 birds, which were hunting beetles that were in cow pies. It was quite something to see the falcon swoop with all its speed only to knock over the cow pie and extract a beetle from under the pie. At another neighbouring farm I saw 10 birds in an area of 50 ha. At Okondeka, Etosha NP I saw a flock of 6 birds perched in the big acacia tree there.

## **NAMIBIA BIRD CLUB**

### **NOTICE TO CONTRIBUTORS**

*LANIOTURDUS* publishes articles and notes of broad birding interest to the membership of the Namibia Bird Club. Contributors should look at recent issues of the magazine for guidance and suitability and presentation of material. Manuscripts in English, German or Afrikaans are requested and should be typed in double spacing on A4 paper. If papers are submitted in German or Afrikaans a short English summary should accompany the article. For papers in English summaries in German or Afrikaans may also be submitted. Sketches, maps and figures should be submitted on good quality white paper in black ink. High contrast black and white or colour photographs (prints or transparencies) may be submitted to illustrate articles. Artwork illustrating any aspect of birds and/or birding are also requested. All submissions should have the author's address, contact telephone number and e-mail address (if applicable).

The preferred medium of submission for articles is either computer disk (high density 3.5") or attachments to e-mails. The preferred word processing programme is MS Word Version 7.0 on Windows 95. Any other programmes are acceptable but authors should also include an alternate version in either text only (.txt) or rich text format (.rtf) files. Handwritten articles are acceptable but must be printed and legible. Short notes and observations should be submitted on a quarterly basis.

All disks and photographs will be returned to authors but manuscripts will not be returned. A single copy of the issue in which your article appeared will be sent to the senior author.

The editor is allowed a wide latitude in choice of materials, thus any views and opinions expressed here are not necessarily those of the Namibia Bird Club. All material in *LANIOTURDUS* is copyright and permission to reproduce material should be negotiated with the Editor.

All contributions for *LANIOTURDUS* should be sent to:

**The Editor *LANIOTURDUS***                      or                      **nwg@iafrica.com.na**  
**Namibia Bird Club**  
**P.O. Box 67**  
**Windhoek, Namibia**