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Editorial

The trials of the Namibia Bird Club continue with it mainly being a Windhoek orientated organization. The number of articles submitted to its journal the *Lanioturdus* has withered to almost unacceptable levels. In 2006 only one issue of the *Lanioturdus* was published and here we are half way through 2007 and finally the editor has enough articles to publish what probably will be the only issue of 2007.

There is obviously an interest in birding within Namibia since there are now many subgroups specializing in aspects of birds. There is Raptors Namibia who publish an on line newsletter once a month. The Crane Working Group, Raptor Road Counts, Rare and Endangered Species Trust working on vultures, and the Wetland Bird Counts which enumerate all the wetlands twice per year.

I know that there are birders observing birds because of the rare birds which have been reported to the magazine *Birds and Birding* from Namibia.

Once again I appeal to all members to help the Namibia Bird Club. If you want to keep the club viable you must also do your part and try and get new members to join. We are currently down to fewer than 100 members.

Fortunately there is good news and there has been a recent increase in the number of articles submitted and hopefully this trend will continue and we could see another issue published this year.

I hope readers will note the addition to the Namibia list of Ruppell's Vulture. There are probably more juvenile Ruppell's Vultures visiting Namibia than we realize. Observers should keep their eyes open when watching vultures at a kill, you may be able to add a new species to your list. If you do see one of these birds please try to photograph it.

Table 8: Top twentyfive localities.

Coordinates	Locality	Total
2235S 1432E	Mile 4 Salt Works	1 484
1921S 1529E	Tandala Ridge, Windpoort Farm	1 269
2234S 1706E	Klein Windhoek	1 023
2235S 1432E	Mile 4 Salt Works	908
2225S 1524E	Nelsville Farmhouse	769
1919S 1422E	Hobatere, Kamanjab	732
1922S 1525E	Klipoort, Windpoort Farm	549
1910S 1554E	Okaukuejo	455
1921S 1529E	Tandala Ridge, Windpoort Farm, Outjo District	371
1910S 1555E	Okaukuejo Rest Camp, Etosha National Park	366
1937S 1711E	Ritzdorf Farmhaus	359
2319S 1732E	Wiese	334
1910S 1555E	Okaukuejo house	320
1802S 2051E	Shamvura	272
2239S 1432E	Swakopmund Sewage Works	248
1919S 1422E	Hobatere	241
2431S 1618E	Zebra River Lodge, Matahole District	241
1852S 1806E	Farm Tsutsab	221
2430S 1750E	Hardap dam	176
1852S 1806E	Tsutsab	174
2406S 1611E	Arbeitsdelt	164
2224S 1530E	Marmor Kuduposten	161
1921S 1529E	Garden, Windpoort Farm	156
2514S 1603E	NRNR, Die Duine house	154
1920S 1527E	Tampan Post, Windpoort Farm	147

BIRD OBSERVATIONS AND NOTES

On 19.12.2006 I saw a single African Spoonbill at the Mile 4 Salt Works north of Swakopmund. On the evening of 21.12.2006 Mark Boorman and I saw the bird again in the same vicinity and Mark thought that you might be interested in the sighting and that it was possibly worth a mention in *Lanioturdus*. The bird in question was sighted near the Seabird Guano building at the extreme northern end of the saltworks. I am pretty sure that it is an immature bird as the legs were dark (not pink) and the facial skin and bill were very dull.

Neil Thomson



Rarely seen at Swakopmund last summer (2006)

Photo: Neil Thomson

White Stork

2 adult birds seen on 6.07.2006, 09h20, near Tsumeb, 1917 BB next to main road M 83 on small holding "Amanzi". These small holdings are irrigated for agriculture, forming a good habitat for those birds. According to "The Atlas of

Southern African Birds", Vol. 1, White Stork have not been recorded on this square or anywhere close to this.

They are non-breeding Palearctic migrants, with scattered records from Namibia mainly from the central highlands and north towards the Etosha Pan. Occurrence in the atlas region is mainly from November to March; some birds, probably immatures, do over-winter, which is more common in the north (Zimbabwe).

Günther & Tineke Friederich

Senegal Coucal

One adult bird reported from farm *Aandrus No. 832, 1918AA*, on 1.07.2006. This bird was seen for at least 5 consecutive days, sitting outside the kitchen window in the mornings, pecking at the window pane. According to "The Atlas of Southern African Birds, Vol. 1", Senegal Coucal has not been atlased anywhere close to this area.

We also have recorded this bird on 1818CC on the 4. & 10.10.2000, perched in a Makalani Palm *Hyphaene petersiana*. This was after the water in *Tsutsab Vlei* had dried up. The next record was during February 2006, after the area was flooded once more. We saw the bird again during May 2006 at the vlei. It was present probably the whole period. The above mentioned sighting could be the same bird which had moved off some distance.

Günther & Tineke Friederich

Syringa Trees

In *Lanioturdus* 36(3) & 39(1) the toxicity of the alien invader Syringa tree *Melia azedarach* is mentioned by Peter Cunningham. He reports *White-backed Mouse-bird* & *Black-throated Canary* feeding on the leaves and *Red-eyed Bulbul* feeding on the ripe fruit.

We have seen the same here on our farm *Tsutsab 293, Tsumeb district 1818 CC*. This time the consumers were *Grey Go-away Birds*. They would peck amongst the ripe, dry fruit. Those too big to swallow whole, they would just drop.

It could be possible that birds consuming this toxic material would later seek another source of food to cancel out this toxicity. No further observations made.

Günther & Tineke Friederich

Augur Buzzard

One adult bird seen on the morning of 20.07.2006, about 06h30, perched on a dead tree near a watering point on Tandala Ridge, farm Windpoort 428, 1915AD, Outjo district. This bird stayed for a while, visiting the waterpoint. Also seen by Tim & Laurel Osborne. According to "The Atlas of Southern African Birds, Vol. 1", this species has a recording rate of less than 2% in that area.

Günther & Tineke Friederich

Didericks Cuckoo

On 19.02.2007 I was on duty at Mahango Game Park at the main gate. I noticed a young fledgling Didericks Cuckoo alone on the fence posts. During this time I was in contact with Mark Paxton from Shamvura Camp who encouraged me to keep an eye on this chick. I subsequently saw the chick on a number of occasions in the next four days in association with a pair of Scarlet-chested Sunbird adults. The chick was seen loudly soliciting actively from both the male and female Sunbirds. My duties did not allow me time to see the adults actively feeding the chick. Nonetheless by their constant and close association over the four day period I am sure that the Scarlet-chested Sunbirds had been parasitized by the Didericks Cuckoo. Recent literature (Roberts Birds of Southern Africa 7th edition) indicates 2 instances of Marico Sunbird parasitism but none from any other Sunbird species.

Ms Petrina Kandjibi

Work hand Mahango Game Park