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EDITORIAL

This is the final edition of *Lanioturdus* for 1997 — the fourth of the year and an achievement for all those people who contributed to the journal over the past year. Although we have seldom exceeded 40 pages in any one edition we feel that the value of the magazine has increased in that we are keeping our members informed and hopefully fostering more interest in birding in Namibia as a whole. Many thanks to all the authors and artists who submitted material for the year and I hope that the articles will keep on rolling in to make 1998 as successful as 1997.

The summer heat is upon us and with the first migrants having already arrived, you should all be looking forward to some excellent birding over the coming holiday period. This may be a particularly interesting year — the predictions of the weather boffins is that *El Nino* is likely to negatively influence the rainfall patterns in the country. This in turn will have a major effect on the distribution and breeding of birds over the next couple of months. I encourage all of you to get out there and look at what's going on — keep field notes on your observations and make some comparisons with what you know of previous years. This applies equally to common as well as rarer species. How much do we really know about doves in this country? I have noticed that in Bushmanland and at Aris, near Windhoek, that the numbers of Namaqua Doves is highly variable both within and between years. I suspect the same thing of Laughing Doves which seem to disappear at certain times of the year. Keeping basic notes and records can tell us so much about the birds we take for granted (many of which are surprisingly poorly studied). Your notes and records do not have to take the form of detailed scientific observations — casual and incidental observations are also valuable. Collect information, put it together in the form of an article and send it to *Lanioturdus*. Anyone can do it and I encourage of all of you to try!!!

On behalf of the Namibia Bird Club Committee, I would like to wish you all a merry Christmas and a prosperous New Year. Good birding in 1998 and let's hear from you.

ever!!!). The Kunene is likely to be one of the best sites to look for this species as it is known from an area in southern Angola only 80 km north of Ruacana.

Eastern Red-footed Falcon *Falco amurensis*

Anton Coy and I (CH) found a single adult female in a small party of Western Red-footed Falcons *Falco verspertinus* just north of Lianshulu Lodge in the Mudumu National Park on 26/11/97. There are only a few records annually of this species in Namibia, but they are regular and should be looked for in the large flocks of migrant raptors following the rainfronts in late December and January.



WESTERN ETOSHA AND HOBATERE LODGE

Daphne McGivern
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The Club had a well attended outing (18 people) to Hobatere Lodge over the long weekend, 23rd to 26th August this year. We had plenty of shade and level areas to set up our tents. Thanks to Steve Braine for accommodating us all!

A flock of Whitebrowed Sparrow-weavers which were resident at the Lodge were cause for great speculation as quite a number of them did not have white brows but were instead dark headed. Eddie Kehlbeck took photos of these birds and we hope to see them at a slide presentation in the new year. Most of our group were able to view a Giant Eagle Owl as she sat on her nest in the crook of a tall tree, also near the lodge.

It was a privilege to be allowed to visit the Western regions of the Etosha Park, and our thanks go to the Ministry of Environment and Tourism for

granting us the Permit. The permit was obtained for six vehicles (30 persons) to enter the park at Galton Gate on day visits on the Sunday and Monday. We made full use of this and two parties went in on both days. The wind got up early on both mornings which in some ways was a relief as the Mopane flies have difficulty in coping with wind! Despite the wind we all enjoyed the birds and also the game which was particularly abundant at the man-made water holes. The natural water holes seemed to be dry. There were large herds of Gemsbok, Springbok, and Burchells Zebra. Red Hartebeest, Blue Wildebeest Giraffe, Baboon, Kudu, Warthog, Jackal and Hartmanns Mountain Zebra were represented in smaller numbers. We saw one Black Rhino, and a group of four Elephant.

We were pleasantly surprised to see fourteen Kori Bustards, we checked, but none of them appeared to be tagged. The bird list within the park reached well into the sixties and included Monteiro's Hornbill, Crimsonbreasted Shrike, Secretarybird, Black Korhaan, Pied Babbler, Blackchested Prinia and Yellowbellied Eremomela.

All in all it was a very worthwhile and enjoyable trip!

BIRDWATCH 97

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It was the first time for the Namibia Bird Club to participate in an International Birdwatch. The committee decided to hold the day at Windhoek's Avis Dam, because is well frequented by the Windhoek Public.

It was 7:00 on 5 October that dedicated members of the committee set up camp at Avis Dam. A large gazebo was erected, chairs and tables arranged and a small display of infomative literature displayed: Telescopes were set up and a large board prepared on which the birds sighted during the day could be listed. It was still nice and cool when everything was ready for the

storm of people to come. Each species of bird sighted was listed on the board. A large number of people came to enquire about our club and its activities. Birders came back to us after doing their round and reported what they had seen and it was included on our list. Five new members signed up for the club and a number of programmes and membership applications were handed out. During the heat of the day some children decided to take a swim across the dam to cool off. A total of 103 bird species were seen during the day without a lot of effort. Overall the day was a great success and we hope to do it again next year. A big thank you goes to all the members who helped us during the day.

It would be great to hear from birders in other centres how they spent birding day.

The birds seen during the day at Avis Dam are listed below.

Dabchick	Blacknecked Grebe
Grey Heron	Redknobbed Coot
Egyptian Goose	Redfaced Mousebird
Whiterumped Swift	Bradfield's Swift
Whitebrowed Sparrow Weaver	Blacksmith Plover
Cape Wagtail	Laughing Dove
Yellowbilled Hornbill	Rock Martin
Great Sparrow	Redbilled Quelea
Dusky Sunbird	Kalahari Robin
Redeyed BulBul	Cape Glossy Starling
Swallowtailed Bee-eater	Marico Flycatcher
Larklike Bunting	Redheaded Finch
Wattled Starling	Scalyfeathered Finch
Grassveld Pipit	Namaqua Dove
Reed Cormorant	South African Shelduck
Blackchested Prinia	Grey Lourie
Blackcheeked Waxbill	Purple Roller
Shorttoed Rockthrush	Titbabbler
Cape Bunting	Ruff
Redbilled Teal	Wood Sandpiper
Crimsonbreasted Shrike	Threebanded Plover
Melba Finch	Whitetailed Shrike
Common Sandpiper	Kittlitz Sandplover
Brubru	Helmeted Guineaowl
Monteiro's Hornbill	Scimitar-billed Hoopoe

Pied Barbet
 Greater Striped Swallow
 Masked Weaver
 Pirit Batis
 Grey Hornbill
 Blackwinged Stilt
 Redbilled Hornbill
 Alpine Swift
 Desert Cisticola
 Maccoa Duck
 Greenshank
 Goldenbreasted Bunting
 Familiar Chat
 Blackthroated Canary
 Common Waxbill
 Pearlspotted Owl
 Forktailed Drongo
 Rock Kestrel
 Rock Pigeon
 Hottentot Teal
 Cape Turtle Dove
 Rattling Cisticola
 Whitethroated Swallow
 Threestreaked Tchagra
 Namaqua Sandgrouse

Whitebacked Mousebird
 Barred Warbler
 Chestnut Weaver
 Rockrunner
 Crowned Plover
 Anteater Chat
 Mountain Chat
 Black Cuckoo
 Common Moorhen
 Longbilled Crombec
 Little Stint
 Violeteared Waxbill
 Rock Bunting
 Lesser Masked Weaver
 Pied Babbler
 Whitethroated Canary
 Palewinged Starling
 Burntnecked Eremomela
 Yellowbellied Eremomela
 House Sparrow
 Yellow Canary
 Gabar Goshawk
 Scarletchested Sunbird
 Greyheaded Sparrow



PROJECTS & ACTIVITIES

CO-SPONSORED BIRD RACE: MEMBERS WELCOME!

In a dual attempt to promote birding and raise funds for the Windhoek International School, the BIRD CLUB has agreed to assist the W.I.S. BIRD RACE on Saturday, 14 March, 1997. The idea is to involve as many parents, staff, and students as possible (Grade 2 and up), to generate sponsorships and money for the International School, and to get as many of these people interested in birding (and the Bird Club) as we can.

Involvement by Bird Club members is welcomed, at all levels. Leaders will be needed to spend the morning birding with small groups of participants (i.e. five or six people per leader, for three-to-four hours on the morning of 14th March), trying to sight as many species as possible — but also assisting