

## SHORT NOTE

Confirmation of Egyptian  
Vulture in the  
Etosha National Park

by

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There has been considerable debate as to whether the Egyptian Vulture *Neophron percnopterus* occurs in the Etosha National Park, if only as a vagrant. Clinning and Jensen (1976) list it as a doubtful species requiring confirmation and later Clinning (1980) cites five separate occasions where unconfirmed sightings of single birds, which may have been the Egyptian Vulture, were made throughout Etosha. McLachlan and Liversidge (1978) regard the species as very rare in our area and request recent sight records.

Bearing in mind the possible confusion which can exist between the Egyptian Vulture, Hooded Vulture *Necrosyrtes monachus*, Palm-nut Vulture *Gypohierax angolensis*, as well as Booted *Hieraëetus pennatus* and Tawny Eagles *Aquila rapax* plus the immature gymnogene *Polyboroides typus*, we report with confidence on the presence of a single Egyptian Vulture in immature plumage at Etosha.

Our sighting occurred close to 10h00 on 23 January 1983 at a man-made gravel pit (approx. 15° 45'E, 19° 00' S) 6 km east of Adamax water-hole, in the Okaukuejo area. The gravel pit held rain-water and the Egyptian Vulture drank during the 15 minute period we observed it. The only other large birds at the water were a Yellow-billed Kite *Milvus aegyptius* and an Egyptian Goose *Alopochen aegyptiacus*, although about 50 other vultures (*Gyps africanus* and *Torgos tracheliotus*) were within two kilometres at a zebra carcass.

We checked all the possible confusing characteristics between the Egyptian Vulture and other visually allied species as detailed by Clinning (1980), including plumage of the head and neck, bill, legs and flight pattern. Our sighting was made on a clear day with no obstructions and at a distance of approximately 25 metres. Consequently, we are completely confident that the bird was an immature Egyptian Vulture.

## REFERENCES

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