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EDITORIAL

Once again this edition of *Lanioturdus* has been considerably delayed in its production as few articles have come in over the past six months. The rush of articles in July and August have been gratifying and I hope that this will continue in the future.

This is the last edition of *Lanioturdus* I will be editing for a while as I am no longer in a position to give the magazine the attention it needs to be successful. When I started as editor about six years ago, I had had no previous active involvement with the bird club up to that time. I got involved because I (and many other members) felt that a small informative and interesting local magazine was absolutely integral to making the club a success and birding in Namibia the pleasurable pastime it should be. I think we succeeded to a large extent and I would like to thank all of those individuals who contributed so much to making *Lanioturdus* a success. Special thanks must go to Carole Roberts who has done the layout of every copy to go out in the last six years and has done so with unfailing good humour. Coleen Mannheimer contributed the vast majority of the artwork for the magazine over the years and deserves a special mention. A special word of thanks also to Hartwig Dedekind, Dieter Ludwig and others who did the german editing, often at short notice. Willi Peters and the staff at Typoprint were always helpful and quick to get the magazine out on time. I would also like to thank the Bird Club Committee and the staff at the Scientific Society who did the posting and packaging, set up exchange agreements and answered many queries.

Tim Osborne has volunteered to take over the editing of the magazine from October onwards. I would like to wish Tim (and I am sure Laurel) well with the editorship in the future and encourage all of the contributors of the past to continue to support the magazine.

WETLAND COUNT AT OTJIVERO DAM

Suzan Mallet-Veale & Fritz Schwennicke
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The count at Otjivero dam always has something to surprise us – be it a lynx on the dam wall or a snake swimming the full breadth of the silt dam or a Jackal Buzzard entertaining us, we always come home satisfied that the outing was well worth the trip.

On Sunday the 9th April we went out for our second count of the year. We collected the key and proceed to the main dam wall but there was not a waterbird in sight, so we went to our normal counting area where we only found two Whitebreasted Cormorants sunning themselves on a rock and one Darter swimming. Disappointed, we left for the silt dam, but did not expect anything better because of the many pools all over the area. We stopped at the boat-launching slipway on the main dam, and found, on the far side, four White Pelicans, one Black Stork and two Egyptian Geese. One Red-billed Teal came flying in from the silt dam.

As we walked down to the water, a raptor flew up from the grass. It was a Jackal Buzzard which we had also seen in January during our count. He flew to the silt dam-wall where his partner was waiting. We left for the silt dam where we found only one Grey Heron and one Red-billed Teal. Fairly frustrated and disappointed, we had no alternative but to watch the Jackal Buzzards entertaining us with their flight up, hovering and going down into the grass on the dam wall and returning to eat whatever prey they had managed to catch. This lasted for quite a while, as we had no further counting to do. We then decided to call it a day as Fritz wanted to watch the motor racing and we still had to go to the Farm.

We dropped off the key, and departed on the gravel road, crossed the Okahua River and checked for further birds, in vain. After we passed the sandbank I saw through the trees, about nine birds in the water: four were Knob-billed Ducks. I asked Fritz to stop, but he drove on to an opening – he just said "Aber Suzan, was ist hier los?" There were hundreds of birds –

it looked like a herd of sheep – in the swampy area of the Nossob river and continuation of the silt dam.

The counting now started in earnest because time was running out. There were Cattle Egrets, Shelduck and Knob-billed Duck for Africa, also some Egyptian Geese, a Great White Egret, two Fulvous Ducks swimming quite near us as well as two Maccoa Ducks. There could have been more and perhaps other species, but Schumacher was not going to wait for the start of the race so we had to leave. Two Bateleurs, an adult and a immature flew by over the plain on the other side of the road. Two Temmincks Coursers also crossed the road and brought to an end a surprising count that started off disappointingly.

ERSTE SICHTUNG EINES GLOCKENREIHERS IN SOSSUSVLEI

Klaus von Ludwiger & Hans-Jurgen Brand
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Als ich am 24 Juni 2000 mit zwei Gästen aus Deutschland unter einen geeigneten Schattenbaum unmittelbar beim wasserreichen Sossusvlei parken wollte, sah ich das außergewöhnliche Verhalten eines schwarzen Vogels, der durch, "Glockenschlagen" auffiel.

Demnach war es ein Glockenreiher (Black Egret) *Egretta ardesiaca*. Diese Reiherart kommt in Namibia nur im wasserreichen äußersten Norden, Nordosten und im Caprivi Zipfel vor und nicht in der Dünennamib.

Es war nur ein Vogel dieser Art in der Zeitspanne zwischen 14h00 und 15h30 Uhr zu entdecken. Ansonsten fiel mir auf, daß fast keine anderen Wasservögel zu sehen waren.

Editors Note: The article above reports on a sighting of a Black Egret at

Sossusvlei in June 2000 following flooding in March. This is a long way out of its known range. A surprising number of Black Egrets were seen around the country during the past wet season. The good rainfall obviously provided the opportunities for birds to move away from their normal haunts on perennial waters to the east.

Additional sightings of this species were from:

Suzan Mallet-Veale, who reports that a Black Egret was seen at Avis Dam in 1999 between January and March. On the 11th April 2000 during a wetland count, two Black Egrets were enjoying their fishing in the Otjivero Main dam with many other waterfowl.

Several residents on the coast were lucky enough to see two birds fishing in the surf between Walvis Bay and Swakopmund over a two-month period (late January to March 2000).

Additional sightings were from the Fish River near Hardap Dam, the Okahandja Sewerage Works and on a small farm dam near Grootfontein.

SCHREISEEADLER SCHLÄGT NILGANS IM FLUGE

Klaus von Ludwiger
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Zwischen dem Grenzörtchen Noordoewer am Oranje und der Fischflußmündung in denselbigen Fluß gibt es laut meinen Informationen drei Seeadler-paare *Haliaetus vocifer*.

Während einer fünftägigen Bootstour in Juni/Juli, gab es auf dieser Strecke Gelegenheiten dieser majestätischen Vögel zu beobachten.

Ein Schreiseeadler-paar mit Jungvogel entdeckten einige Nilgänse, welche Stromab flogen. Plötzlich stieß einer der beiden Altvögel hinab auf eine Nilgans, welche jedoch zu schwer für ihn war. Er mußte sie fallen lassen und sie schlug wie ein Stein am Flußufer auf. Sie war sofort tot.

Wir verweilten mit unseren Booten noch etwas in der Umgebung, um zu sehen ob die Vögel zu ihren Opfer kamen – leider erfolglos.

REVIEW OF BIRD RINGING IN NAMIBIA – 1997 to 1998

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Ringling of Namibian birds has always been done by a relatively small but highly motivated band of ring and flingers within Namibia, aided by a few visitors from South Africa and overseas. This is a short summary of the ringers and the birds they ringed in 1997/98. A previous summary was provided by Brown (1991) who reviewed the period 1980 to 1990. He found that 11,620 birds of 308 species were ringed in this eleven-year period, and at least three groups (Skeleton Coast staff, Dieter Ludwig and Chris Brown) had ringed over 1000 birds. Thus, on average, 1056 birds were ringed per annum. Simmons (1991), reviewed the pros and cons of ringling and flinging in a country as large as Namibia and highlighted the very low recovery rate of about 0.7% of all birds ringed. He recommended colour-marking birds to increase the reporting rate.

The summary here is based on SAFRING Schedule 1 forms sent direct to the Ornithology Section (a part of the ringling permit requirements) and also a summary of 1997/98 records, as a service provided by SAFRING (D. Oschadleus in litt.).

Active ringers

While Namibia has few ringers they are all fairly active and they catch a wide range of species. Table 1 gives those ringers currently active in Namibia. Some enthusiasts are ringling purely for the interest of putting rings on birds and hoping for interesting returns, (much valuable data is also collected on morphology from such studies); other ringling such as Peter