

# LANIOTURDUS

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## Editorial

Once again in this issue we are able to report on species new to Namibia. Er, well, perhaps one of them is not really new to Namibia, but none of the previous records was accepted.

The species concerned is the Black Skimmer, a species native to the Americas and for which, as far as I can determine, there were no confirmed records on this side of the Atlantic Ocean.

A single bird suddenly appeared at Rietvlei near Cape Town in October 2012, stayed a few days and then disappeared. A couple of days later a single bird (believed to be the same individual) appeared in Walvis Bay, stayed for a short period and again disappeared.

There have been two previous unconfirmed records of this species in Namibia of which I am aware. The first is Joris Komen's record from the Rundu Sewage Works in the mid 1980's which was not accepted by the then rarities committee on the grounds that it was just too unlikely that this species had found its way there - I don't think that Joris has forgiven that committee to this day.

The second record is Tony Tree's sighting of a single bird at Walvis Bay in February 1998, which, as far as I am aware, was also shot down by the rarities committee.

For more on the Walvis Bay Black Skimmer see Otto Schmidt's article and John Paterson's stunning action picture in the "Rarities and Interesting Observations" section of this issue.

The second new species is Burchell's Coucal which was included in an atlas list for a pentad just north of Gochas.

As far as I can determine, what is now Burchell's Coucal, is also new to Namibia since the White-browed and Burchell's Coucals were split some time ago. I am somewhat concerned though that this might be a misidentification although the atlaser was adamant that she was well acquainted with this species and that there was no mistake. We have, in recent years, had wandering Senegal Coucals with one being seen at Sonnleiten near the international airport. Could this be another of these wanderers rather than a Burchell's Coucal?

And then for a short while I thought that we had a third. A well known birder from South Africa informed us of a Common Redstart that had flown across the road in front of his vehicle near Karibib.

In the course of correspondence with this person I mentioned that a "non birder" had claimed to have seen a Common Redstart in Windhoek about a year previously which, without photographic evidence, I had dismissed as most likely being a misidentified Short-toed Rock-Thrush. The South African birder then very apologetically withdrew his sighting having realized that it was almost definitely a Short-toed Rock-Thrush that he too had seen.

In this day and age of digital cameras it is so much easier to obtain the "proof" required to have these records validated. If you see something unusual, get the camera out and get it in the box. This could save you a lot of heartbreak later when someone decides that your field notes, description and sketch don't quite add up to what you know you have seen.

In this edition we feature an article dealing with falconry in the Middle East. Falconry is a very controversial topic and I would like to stress here that any views expressed in the article are not necessarily the views of the Namibia Bird Club or any of its office bearers.

## A Trip to Al Ain, Abu Dhabi Part 1 – Desert Camp

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*As a keen birder with a special interest in falconry I had the opportunity to travel to the United Arab Emirates at the end of 2011 to observe firsthand how falconry is practiced in the Middle East and to observe the breeding programme for the Houbara Bustard which is one of the target species for falconers and other hunters in that part of the world...*

In the early morning before sunrise a thick cloud cover lies like a blanket over the desert and we can barely see the camel stables 100 m ahead of us; just the blurred spotlight gives us direction through the thick sand. After being greeted at the stables with a hot cup of spicy local tea, the camels are brought out and on a loud "Gue" made by the Arab handlers the 2.5 m tall beasts bend their knees and lie down on the sand, roaring in protest. The traditional blanket saddles are secured by ropes and only a rolled up blanket at the back of the hump prevents one from sliding off. It takes a while to find the least uncomfortable position and then one is able to start looking around at the other people trying to stay on.





ARABIAN HORSEMAN

An Arab horseman leads the way, followed by the local falconer with his black Gyr x Saker hybrid falcon on his “mangala”, the traditional glove. After a few kilometres the fresh tracks of a desert hare lead us deeper into the desert. When the hare breaks cover from a bush 150 m ahead of us the falconer releases the bird and the chase is on. The gap is closed quickly but some nifty footwork from the hare leaves the falcon sitting on the sand. The falcon is not ready to give up and follows in hot pursuit. Both the hare and the falcon disappear over a dune and everyone gapes in silence. Suddenly a gazelle comes bolting out beside the next dune and the falcon is not far behind. Constant swoops at the gazelle’s head are all for nothing as the falcon soon realizes there are no salukis (traditional hunting dogs) to back her up today and she lands on the dune.



ARABIAN FALCONER WITH GYR FALCON ON “MANGALA”

By now the mist has cleared and we set off in the hope of finding another hare. After about thirty minutes of bumpy riding we find some tracks that have broken the wet crust made by the fog on the sand and we know that the hare has to be close. The falcon bobs its head as it stares at a few desert shrubs about 200 m straight ahead of the caravan. “Yes” is all the horseman says and the falconer casts off the falcon. Far ahead between the desert shrubs we spot the hare still unaware of our presence. The falcon pumps its wings closing in fast. Suddenly the hare shoots out of the blocks at the speed of lighting and the chase is on. After a few quick turns and unbelievable maneuvers by the two athletes, both the hare and the falcon disappear over the ridge of the dune.



COOKING SHELTER

On the other side we find the falcon sitting on top of the hare plucking its fur and pausing occasionally to catch its breath. It has caught the hare behind the head and killed it with a bite behind the neck, obviously not the first time it has caught a hare. The kill needs to be quick as the falcon can easily get kicked off or even injured by a hare. With all the excitement over and photographs taken we commence the long ride back to camp. A large crowd of people who have just arrived in the buses from the city awaits us.

After some photographs have been taken we head for the cooking shelter where Arab ladies dressed from head to toe in black have prepared traditional meals. The rest of the morning we hang around the camp talking about the excitement of the hunt and checking out some falcons being trained to a helium balloon 200 m above the ground.

Lunch is an easy choice between western food and camel curry and rice. Hard to imagine it but camel is really delicious!

Right after lunch we head off to the falcon racing. This is a 400 m sprint and today it is the turn of the Gyr x Sakers show their strength. All around the start are brand new Land Cruisers with engines idling to run the



air conditioners to keep the falcons cool inside. Each falcon's rings are checked and marked off by the official just before it is unhooded and cast off to a lure swung at the other end of the track. The race is slightly



into the wind and two laser beams record the time which is displayed on a screen in the stylish tent with Persian carpets where all the contestants eagerly await the results. The winner will drive away with a brand new

luxurious Land Cruiser... well actually another one, as everyone already owns one.



All the times are between 16 and 20 seconds. That is except for the few falcons that got disqualified for losing focus and pursuing a wild dove crossing the track. In level flight the falcon will never catch the dove but it is entertaining to see the owner run for his vehicle and give chase to retrieve his prized bird.

In the evening back in the desert camp we kick off our shoes, (one always takes one's shoes off before entering a tent or sitting around the fire), and join the Arabs sitting on the sand at the camp fire. Only one of the Arabs at the fire can speak English and another some broken sentences. We share stories and tales late into the night while enjoying freshly made spicy tea from the fire.



The next morning after some pancakes made by the ladies in the palm frond shelter we get onto one of the buses from the city which takes us to the National Avian Research Centre. On arrival we are greeted with some drinks and snacks in a five star lounge that looks out into an aviary containing some Houbara Bustards. Our first thoughts are that they will have a few birds in cages that will lay eggs and raise the young. After a short welcoming speech and short introduction to the programme we split up in two groups. We set off over a piece of bare land to some buildings shimmering in the heat in the distance.

At these buildings we are greeted by a small man in a white overall. These buildings are where they breed the food for the Houbaras and the inside looks more like a laboratory than what we expect to see. First he shows us the cricket production area where they produce crickets by the millions from pin head size for the Houbara chicks up to fully grown adults for the breeding birds. All are arranged by size in different containers. From the



contaminating it. The surplus mince are packed and frozen for backup or sold. The next room is for the mealworms. Here 15 boxes of apples and 300 kg potatoes and carrots are sent through the electric vegetable slicer daily to feed the hungry worms and produce the daily harvest of between 50 and 60 kg of worms. For 2012 they plan to increase the production to between 120 and 130 kg per day.



crickets we move to the next room again with a shiny floor, well lighted and spotless. Here they produce 4 000 mice per day from pinkies to half grown. There are rows and rows of specially designed white trays with a thick layer of wood shavings, each of which houses fifteen females and one male. Fresh food and water are supplied from the top through the mesh lid of the tray to prevent the mice from



From the food production building we cross the piece of bare land again and stop outside the hatchery. On our right are large industrial type buildings where the breeding birds are kept but these buildings are off limits to visitors. Even a stranger feeding the birds can influence the breeding cycle. The environment inside these buildings where the Houbaras are kept is controlled in respect of the lighting,

temperature and humidity. This allows the breeder to extend the breeding season by making it start earlier and last longer than it would in nature. One thousand male and two thousand female birds are kept in individual enclosures which are all closely monitored.

In the hatchery we are greeted by a French doctor. His father was a chicken farmer which is where his interest in bird production started. He later did his doctorate on chicken production in France and now he works in the UAE and uses that knowledge to breed these rare birds. Semen is harvested from the male birds and all the DNA data is fed into a computer. A special programme arranges and matches the semen to the best suited female to produce the widest possible gene pool. The male birds can injure or even kill the females during mating by biting and pecking them behind the head and neck. Therefore all insemination is done by hand and also to make sure each egg is fertilized. As soon as the eggs are laid they are numbered and weighed and placed in an incubator with 30% humidity. Each egg is the subject of an A4 page which contains all the information relating to that specific egg. The page also has space to fill in weights and comments each

correct weight loss graph. If necessary an egg is punctured to make it lose more weight. Each egg is checked and weighed daily to ensure it stays as close as possible to the graph. On the last day the eggs are moved to a hatching incubator. As soon as the chick hatches it is ringed and receives a new A4 sheet. The chicks are placed in enclosures in groups of five and are hand fed until they are big enough to feed themselves. As soon as they are big enough they receive the larger permanent rings. In 2011 this facility produced 2 700 birds. The centre in Morocco produces 15 000 birds annually. The aim is to release 50 000 Houbaras per year into the wild across its range.



On our way back the buses stop at the Saluki racing. The Saluki (*sometimes also called Gazelle Hound - Ed*) is the Arabs' traditional hunting dog and looks a lot like a greyhound but has a longer tail and hairy ears. They look



day until it hatches. After three days the eggs are weighed and they should have lost 15% of their original mass. If not they are moved to other incubators with 10%, 40%, 50% or 65% humidity to get them back in line with the

as if they are a bit uncomfortable walking around on their toes with their tails between their legs, but when these dogs get up to

speed one sees exactly what they are bred for. The sun is low and it is the last race of the day. Everyone is eager to see this age old form of racing. Each dog is held back by its owner and a dummy gazelle hanging from a pole attached to a Land Cruiser a few of metres in front of them is making them crazy. At the starting signal the salukis sprint down the track at lightning speed and the owners head twice as fast straight for their vehicles. Then it is just one big dust cloud with the roar of V8 engines as cruisers pull away to beat the dogs to the finish line. One must stand well out of the way in order not to be run over. It all seems chaos but all focus is quickly back on the racing dogs. It feels as if everything is over just as quickly as it had started. When the last dog crosses the finish line and the dust settles together with the excitement we return to the desert camp.



Early in the morning the falcons are put out on their blocks and the last training sessions are worked in. We help to feed some of the falcons while others start packing for the move to Al Ain. The Sheik's falcons are only handled by his personal falconers. Some of the birds are from the Al Ain Zoo, others from breeding centres or privately owned. All the falcons had been tamed and trained over the last two weeks for the third International Falconry Festival that would be held over the next couple of days at Jahili Fort, Al Ain. But that is a story for another day.

## The "Real" Difference between Swallows and Swifts

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In my old copy of Newman's Birds of Southern Africa there is a two page spread explaining the differences between swallows/martins and swifts. Generally these differences are in the wing shape, colour, tail shape, flight pattern and the ability/inability to perch. I find it very easy to distinguish between swallows and swifts (some of the individual species are a bit trickier though) and I am always surprised to find that there are people who cannot distinguish them, but, if you are one of those, you are in good company.

The Common Swift was described by Linnaeus himself in 1758 and he named the species *Hirundo apus* (*Hirundo* (Latin) = a swallow, *apus* (Greek) = without feet – on account of the very short legs). It was only later that it was realized that this bird was not a swallow at all but of an entirely different genus and it was renamed *Apus apus*. Even though the describing of species was in its infancy at that time I am quite surprised that Linnaeus made this mistake. In the hand swallows and swifts are such different birds that it should be glaringly obvious that they have to be of different genera. Even a count of the primary flight feathers would reveal this as swallows have nine and swifts ten.

It is when one has the live bird in the hand that, in my opinion, one discovers the "real" difference between swallows and swifts and this, of course, is something that none of the field guides and other books mention. Swallows are laidback, gentle little birds which are very easy to handle (although they do have sharp claws) while swifts are the exact opposite. Most of my experience with swifts has been with Little Swifts and I find them particularly nasty little customers - in fact I prefer handling birds such as Acacia Pied Barbets and Rosy-faced Lovebirds because with those species, if one is careful, one can avoid being bitten. With Little Swifts it is almost guaranteed that one will be painfully

clawed. When one has a Little Swift in the hand the bird will almost certainly embed the four needle sharp little claws of one foot into a finger forcing one to prise them out one by one immediately after which the nasty little bird is likely to embed the four needle sharp little claws of the other foot into another finger – and so the process continues. Ringers handling swifts need to be prepared to shed blood.

I believe that this behaviour of the swifts stems from the fact that a swift senses that if it falls to the ground it is in trouble and will thus hold onto anything as tightly as possible to avoid falling to the ground. Some of the swifts I have caught in mistnets have not been entangled at all but have merely grabbed the mesh and held on after hitting the net. I had read that if one puts a swift onto the ground it is unable to get itself airborne again as, due to its very short legs and very long wings, it is unable to get a downstroke sufficient to give it lift. I have tried this but in my experience all the swifts I have put on the ground have managed to get themselves airborne albeit with some difficulty. However, I placed the birds on a smooth surface at the top of a flight of stairs. I should think that if a swift went down in long grass it would stand very little chance of getting itself back into the air.



Photo : © Neil Thomson

So in spite of all the physical differences between swallows and swifts to me, as a ringer, the “real” difference is in the temperament of the birds with swallows being

laidback and swifts being really nasty and I think that any ringer who has handled Little Swifts will agree with me.

PS : This was written with shredded fingers after handling eight Little Swifts in a day!

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## **Vulture Ringing on Farm Smalhoek, 2012**

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Who would guess that a leisurely Sunday outing had as main requirement the ability to fearlessly scale a 10 m ladder, swaying among branches and thorns, at the top of which awaits a bird with a fearsome beak, ready to take off your finger? This was the first thing I learnt on a Bird Club outing to ring vultures on a farm near Dordabis. The second lesson was to stay upwind and keep your shoes tucked under your body if someone had a bird in the hand...





To ring a vulture chick you've first got to climb up a 10 metre ladder and be able to stay there while you wrap the chick in your special canvas bag. With only the ladder between yourself and a thorny fall, you climb down and the chick is processed after which you've got to climb up again, put the chick back and take careful measurements of the nest.



The ladder is then collapsed to its normal 6 m and off goes Holger with his entourage of enthusiastic helpers to the next tree where the process starts again with a search for the best angle at which to lean the ladder against the nest. Not as simple as it sounds, because you've got leave a gap between the camelthorn branches for a body to get through on its way to and from the nest.

The second lesson was the most impressive to the two children accompanying Louis and me on this outing. Vulture vomit smells like an abattoir and if it splashes on your shoes, you'd better get to water before you get in the car. It is common White-backed Vulture behaviour to vomit when handled by researchers or in other stressful circumstances and some scientists postulate that this evolved as a mechanism to off-load extra weight in order to become airborne/fly faster when evading predators.

The vulture ringing outing to Smalhoek was attended by about 28 people, including Dave Joubert and four of his Polytech nature conservation students. The students, as well as the rest of us, got a chance to climb the ladder and ring a vulture ... a treat that the students accepted with the alacrity of people not suffering from back pain.



We processed eleven nests and ten chicks were brought down. Two were too small to tag although they were large enough to ring and another was not tagged because the instrument failed and Holger did not want to further stress the bird, bringing the total of birds tagged to seven on the Sunday. One nest contained an egg which was probably infertile or addled seeing that it was late in the breeding season. Sunday was only the first day of a longer process and by the time Peter Bridgford and Holger Kolberg finished, the total tally for Smalhoek was 18 White-backed Vultures tagged, two eggs and three chicks too small to tag. Peter says that the previous year they ringed six White-backed Vultures and found one egg.



Smalhoek is the farm where owner Helmuth Stehn, at that time a non-birder, observed White-backed Vultures eating the plant Slangkop (*Pseudogaltonia clavata*) which is believed to be poisonous. An article on this phenomenon was published in *Lanioturdus* 45 (3). Peter believes it is only the third time that anything about vultures eating plant material has been published and it was all thanks to Helmuth's observations and his willingness to share information.



Peter Bridgeford and Holger Kolberg spent the two weeks following that Sunday ringing vultures in the Dordabis and Gobabis areas. It is part of an ongoing project to promote vulture conservation and make farmers and farm workers aware of the importance of vultures and the risks they face. They processed 50 White-backed and three Lappet-faced Vultures on nine farms. That's a lot of ladders to climb.

## Workshop Birding

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All photographs in this article are © Eckart Demasius

It was a Monday morning in office; the telephone rang - why was I not in Otjiwarongo for the workshop? Invitation - what invitation? - and so on. I love workshops, I love them even more when they are organised like this one seemed to be. My frustration reached maximum permissible tolerance levels.

Anyway, soon I was on my way to Otjiwarongo and after I had secured accommodation at Otjibamba Lodge just outside Otjiwarongo I felt a wee bit better.

I arrived late in the afternoon, in time for a little walk in the beautiful gardens. A Southern Masked-Weaver showed me the way.



A Helmeted Guinea fowl was enjoying the lush green veld...



... while a Groundscraper Thrush watched the proceedings from an acacia.



Oh no!! What do I see here? Flamingos in captivity. I do not understand what pleasure people derive from keeping birds (for that matter any animal) in captivity. I believe in “do to others as you want to be done by” and I cannot imagine a half sane person enjoying being in jail.



But then, where do you see Red-billed Spurfowl feeding together with Greater Flamingo?



A loud babbling noise emerged from the thick bush around the waterhole; at first I could not quite place it, indicating that I had not been to the bush for quite a while, but then, there it was, the Southern Pied Babbler, a bird long last seen.



I walked back to the waterhole where the Red-billed Spurfowl was looking for something to eat.

And there it was, the flicking of the wings, the speckled chest and striped head – yes it fitted, Spotted Flycatcher!



The next morning I was greeted by its local cousin, the Marico Flycatcher ...



Morning time is feeding time and the Southern Pied Babbler was already busy foraging for food....



... while the Crimson-breasted Shrike was first doing a bungalow inspection....



before taking time to find a nice and juicy breakfast for itself.



Both the Southern Masked-Weaver and the Lesser Masked-Weaver were already at work building new homes.



In between they were fighting each other although there was so much space for both of them.



In the afternoon when I returned from my workshop I witnessed how a Southern Masked-Weaver tied the first knot for his new nest.



Within ten minutes the “foundation” for the new home was constructed thanks to some craftsmanship that left me gasping in admiration.



The next morning both the Southern and Lesser Masked-Weavers showed off the finer skills of their craftsmanship in nest building.



That afternoon it was the turn of the Great Sparrow to show me the way.



First I was able to study a very simple but innovative bird feeder which certainly kept the overpowering doves at bay.



Then a Brubru telephoned his friend to tell him that that.....



.....the two masked-weaver species had decided to call it a day after all the hard work and fighting and to rather take a bath and cool off a bit before a restful sleep.



The next morning's walk started noisily with a woodpecker making quite a noise. It probably scared the wits out of a poor worm before it eventually got the better of it.

I moved to a quieter place and stood under a tree waiting for something to happen when I felt I was being watched.



I turned around and to my amazement I saw a Pearl-spotted Owlet watching me with a very stern expression.

Then the Grey Go-away-bird told me to "go away".



Well it was indeed time to go and I thought to myself that the workshop had turned out to be pretty good after all!!

### **A Zambian Birding Experience 2-6 July 2012 Trip (Part 1)**

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Open Africa is in the process of developing a birding route in south-western Zambia. This area is best known for the highly localised and endangered Black-cheeked Lovebird. Besides the lovebirds the area is well known for the Caprivi/Delta specials including Schalow's Turaco, Coppery-tailed, Senegal and White-browed Coucals, Chirping and Luapula Cisticolas, White-backed Night-Heron, Rufous-bellied Heron, African Pygmy-Goose, Slaty Egret, Lesser Jacana, Western Banded Snake-Eagle, Shelley's Sunbird, Three-banded Courser, Tropical and Swamp Boubous, Brown Firefinch, African Skimmer, Pel's Fishing-Owl and Long-toed Lapwing, to name a few.

As part of the development and promotion of the route and local guides, Open Africa had approached Caprivi Birding Safaris/Tutwa Tourism and Travel to help organise and lead the first organised trip. They were sponsoring and covering a lot of the expenses for this trip. Caprivi Birding Safaris/Tutwa Tourism and Travel referred this to the Namibia Bird Club to try to find birders who might be interested in going.

This seemed to be a difficult search. Only Jutta Surén from Windhoek and I had initially shown interest. I just could not let this opportunity go by however, and I managed to get Werner von Maltzahn from Otavi into the

mistnet, (although I'm no ringer, nor have I actually attempted to catch people in a net as yet). But it worked; I had reeled in a great companion for the trip. We would travel together by road from Grootfontein; Jutta would fly to Katima Mulilo from Windhoek. I had an offer from one member of the Bird Club to carry my bags during this trip, but I was so loaded, it would not have been nice to this person for me to have accepted this offer.

### **Sunday 1<sup>st</sup> July 2012:**

On Sunday morning, 01 July 2012, Werner and I departed from Grootfontein. We would have done so in Werner's more comfortable Audi, but he had called me the day before to inform me that he had a steering problem on his car; did I have a vehicle available? So it was back to my trusty old Toyota Hi-Lux 4x4. With a full 140 l tank and extra 150 l of cheaper fuel from Grootfontein we departed. In Rundu we refuelled once more, had a look at the floodplains of the Okavango River and then carried on towards Shamvura Camp belonging to the Paxtons, just east of the confluence of the Cuito and Okavango Rivers. From there we carried on to Popa Falls, where I had booked a river cabin, for an overnight stop.

After unpacking, we strolled along the walking trails (did the hippos also use them?). Werner insisted on seeing the rapids. We followed the route towards a stream with the only possibility to cross, a line of rocks in rushing waters, most of them wet and slippery. Werner? – hop, hop, hop – crossed. Me? Shit! Do I have to? I have had my experiences before, like running into things unintentionally, taking a shortcut down a windmill (no shortcut possible – just straight down)... But I had not tried this before; so – what the heck – I'll do this, cautiously and slowly however. And so it came to pass as it had to: an accident on its way to a place to happen. I slipped on a rock and found myself in rushing water, close to hip-deep. But nothing serious came of this, binoculars still dry, and we carried on. Only I left the last rock outcrops to Werner. Not me again, thank you!

### **Monday 2<sup>nd</sup> July 2012:**

Monday morning, after breakfast we left for Katima Mulilo. Just outside Divundu we stopped for a raptor in a tree. It flew off, no ID. Just back on the road we saw the first and only elephant on the route. At Kongola, on the Kwando River, we had a late breakfast break – Greater Striped Swallow and some waterbirds. We arrived at Katima around lunchtime where we were met by Katy Sharpe and Nick Buys. There was still enough time to transfer our stuff and fill up with drinks. Jutta was collected at the airport and we departed in two vehicles, loaded with everything imaginable.



Participants on the excursion - back: the author; from left: Nick Buys, Jutta Surén, Katy Sharpe, Werner von Maltzahn

Crossing the border was an experience in itself. The Namibian side was efficient, the only problems were the locals who have not yet learned that you should wait your turn to be dealt with, pushing into the line in “a straight bundle”. The Zambian side was quite chaotic but we were through in a reasonable time.

We crossed the bridge over the Zambezi into Sesheke and proceeded on tarmac that was plastered with speed bumps that could damage your vehicle's shocks, or full of potholes which had to be negotiated carefully and with some heavy trucks coming from the direction of Livingstone. On Nick's suggestion we started recording every bird sighting. For this purpose I had brought along a notebook

which I started to use more or less successfully, depending on the quality of the road and Nick's driving. This recording later turned into a voluntarily obligation, as I was unanimously appointed by the party as record keeping officer.

At Shackleton's Lodge we were met by the personnel with a welcome drink and shown to our chalets. Wow! What luxury!

Each chalet had a splendid view over the Zambezi and surrounding floodplains. We settled in quickly, the boat was waiting.



Slowly we made our way downriver. Birds everywhere, calling, flying around ... Stop the boat! Back! Aah – beautiful! Time to get the camera into operation. Now, what now? Why would this thing not do what it's supposed to do? Just nothing. Is the card faulty? Jutta: "Try my card". But still nothing. Until I checked the display: "Bat" flashing. Oh yeah! Nice! Good! Just what I needed right then! It

had happened to me before with a vital bird. Why was the battery flat? I had charged it fully before I left home. Good then, thank you very much, no photos, serves you right if you leave the camera on. So Jutta's camera had to work double shift and I had only two things to concentrate on viz. observing and recording.

Purple, Squacco and Grey Heron; Black-collared Barbet; Malachite, Half-collared, Giant and Pied Kingfisher; Grey-headed Gull; Yellow-billed Stork flying; African Marsh-Harrier; African Skimmer on a sandbank and also skimming; African Sacred Ibis; African Spoonbill flying; White-crowned Lapwing; Black-winged Stilt and African Fish-Eagle were some of the birds we recorded. There were some lifers among them for us. But what were the two Greater Flamingos, flying amidst the flock of African Openbills, doing in this area?



The sun had set in the meantime and as it was getting quite cool, we made our way back. There was time for a decent hot shower. I plugged the camera battery onto the supply net to get it charged while the generator was running. In the bush camps over the following days we would not have such luxury. Around the campfire we had drinks and discussions. A delicious buffet dinner was served, after that it was off to get some rest and get the emotions experienced for this day under control. The jackpot for the evening: a hot water bottle in the bed! Those people really thought of every small detail. This did our freezing feet the world of good.



## Tuesday 3<sup>rd</sup> July 2012:

Tuesday morning saw me up before daybreak, sitting outside on the porch, listening to bird calls. I could hear Barn Owl, Southern White-faced Scops-Owl and a Bittern, amongst the others. It was cold, so the fire was a welcome retreat, as well as the coffee. Slowly everybody pitched up. But where was Werner? We had wanted to see what birds popped up around the lodge; was he still asleep? He eventually turned up, surprised that we were all ready. He had waited for his first morning coffee to be served in his chalet; the coffee we had tried in vain to coax out of the waiters the previous evening. Bad luck for him!

We searched the close surroundings of the lodge for birds. Golden Weaver; African Yellow White-eye; Meyer's Parrot. A Boubou was the subject of discussions. It was still close to the Zambezi. Was this then a Swamp or a Tropical? The Swamp is "restricted to well-vegetated waterways..." has ..."almost snow-white underparts...", whereas the Tropical Boubou has ..."creamy white to pinkish underparts..." (Roberts Bird Guide – 2007). We made our decision and carried on.

Boarding the vehicles again, we made our way out towards the "Simungoma Important Bird Area", stopping for bird parties along the way: Neddicky; Black-backed Puffback; Southern Black Tit; Red-headed Weaver; a Gabar Goshawk which was mobbed by a Pied Crow.

At the turnoff to "Simungoma IBA" we met our guide, Brian. He would guide us around and probably lead us to the "White-bellied Korhaan", which was supposed to occur in this area.



We concentrated mostly on the edges of the vast floodplains, keeping the open vegetation behind us. Katy and Jutta reported a Lizard Buzzard they had seen on their way, so it was a turnaround for us other three. The bird had not yet flown from its perch, giving us a chance to have a good look at it. Scanning the reedbeds we saw Lesser Swamp-Warbler; Common Moorhen; Tawny-flanked Prinia; Little Grebe; African Rail ...



We turned off the floodplains into the bush, consisting mainly of Silver Cluster Leaf (*Terminalia sericea*), *Acacia* species, there were Large Sourplum (*Ximenia caffra*) (STOP: I'm birding here, not tree atlasing!). There I was very lucky to flush a nightjar, no ID. Had anybody else passed there it would have sat tight, but from my size 13 boot there would have been no escape, so it had no choice but to make the sensible decision to search for another roost.

We discussed the presence of the White-bellied Korhaan with Brian. Although this area had been combed extensively earlier in search of this bird, nothing had been found. Brian informed us that the children of the nearby village had seen this bird earlier during the morning. At about 10h00, I heard a Red-crested Korhaan calling in the bushes, a distance away, from the direction that Brian had indicated the White-bellied Korhaan had been seen. Werner and Brian did a scan into the bushes with no result. Back at home I listened to the different calls of Red-crested and White-bellied Korhaan – it was definitely a Red-crested I had heard. My conclusion is that, until a positive sighting of White-bellied

Korhaan is made in this area, in my opinion its presence there remains doubtful.

Turning our attention back towards the floodplains we came upon a waterlily vlei. It was full of life: Lesser Moorhen; Little Bittern; some Pygmy Geese; White-backed Duck; Grey and Squacco Heron; Pied Kingfisher; Hottentot Teal, to name but a few. Vegetation on the vlei was quite dense so we had to scan intensively to find the concealed birds between the plants.



At about 12h45 we made our way back to Shackleton's Lodge. There we packed our gear, bade our farewell and gratitude to the staff and left for the "Muchile IBA", which was a few hours drive away, taking the track, Nick's driving (Katy had no choice but to follow) and ongoing birding into account.

List of birds recorded for Shackleton Lodge and Simungoma IBA area

- Cardinal Woodpecker
- Red-billed Buffalo-Weaver
- Pied Crow
- Blue Waxbill
- White-browed Sparrow-Weaver
- Fork-tailed Drongo
- Blacksmith Lapwing
- Lilac-breasted Roller
- African Harrier-Hawk
- Red-billed Hornbill
- Crested Francolin
- Southern Yellow-billed Hornbill
- Dark-capped Bulbul
- Purple Heron
- Swamp Boubou

- Grey Go-away-bird
- African Jacana
- Grey Heron
- Reed Cormorant
- Cape Turtle-Dove
- Black-collared Barbet
- Burchell's Starling
- Pied Kingfisher
- Little Bee-eater
- Grey-headed Gull
- African Grey Hornbill
- Little Egret
- Malachite Kingfisher
- Giant Kingfisher
- Yellow-bellied Greenbul
- Grey-backed Camaroptera
- Half-collared Kingfisher
- Great Egret
- White-browed Robin-Chat
- Lesser Striped Swallow
- White-fronted Bee-eater
- Yellow-billed Stork
- Pied Wagtail
- Southern Masked-Weaver
- Hartlaub's Babbler
- Green-backed Heron
- Marico Sunbird
- African Marsh-Harrier
- African Skimmer
- Tawny-flanked Prinia
- African Sacred Ibis
- Greater Flamingo
- African Spoonbill
- Comb Duck
- White-crowned Lapwing
- Black-winged Stilt
- Little Bittern
- Common Greenshank
- Black-crowned Night-Heron
- Black Heron
- Coppery-tailed Coucal
- African Openbill
- African Fish-Eagle
- Squacco Heron
- Red-billed Spurfowl
- Spectacled Weaver
- White-breasted Cormorant
- Black Crake
- Barn Owl
- Southern White-faced Scops-Owl
- African Green-Pigeon
- Goliath Heron
- Golden Weaver
- African Yellow White-eye
- Southern Grey-headed Sparrow
- Meyer's Parrot
- White-bellied Sunbird

Red-eyed Dove  
 Red-faced Mousebird  
 African Mourning Dove  
 Tropical Boubou  
 Wire-tailed Swallow  
 Black-faced Waxbill  
 Magpie Shrike  
 Neddicky  
 Violet-eared Waxbill  
 Black-backed Puffback  
 Red-billed Firefinch  
 Green Wood-Hoopoe  
 Common Scimitarbill  
 Burnt-necked Eremomela  
 Bearded Scrub-Robin  
 Long-billed Crombec  
 Chinspot Batis  
 Southern Black Tit  
 Brubru  
 Brown-crowned Tchagra  
 Swallow-tailed Bee-eater  
 Red-headed Weaver  
 Arrow-marked Babbler  
 Purple Roller  
 Gabar Goshawk  
 Terrestrial Brownbul  
 Emerald-spotted Wood-Dove  
 Black-throated Canary  
 Grey-rumped Swallow  
 Yellow-fronted Tinkerbird  
 Hamerkop  
 Lizard Buzzard  
 Lesser Swamp-Warbler  
 Red-billed Teal  
 Red-billed Oxpecker  
 Little Grebe  
 African Rail  
 Red-crested Korhaan  
 Lesser Moorhen  
 African Stonechat  
 African Pipit  
 African Wattled Lapwing  
 Pygmy Goose  
 White-backed Duck  
 Hottentot Teal  
 Cattle Egret  
 Crowned Lapwing  
 Rattling Cisticola  
 Bateleur  
 Swainson's Spurfowl  
 Namaqua Dove

(123 species)

## **More Records for the Cape Eagle-Owl *Bubo capensis* in North-Western Namibia**

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Only five published substantiated records for the Cape Eagle-Owl in Namibia exist, four of which are substantiated by photographs and the fifth by a sound recording (Swanepoel 2003, 2005). Our knowledge regarding the distribution of this enigmatic owl species thus is mostly based on call records and a few sight records. These owls occur in remote areas and unless calling their presence is usually not detected.

Since the last published record of Cape Eagle-Owl in Namibia in 2005 (Swanepoel 2005), the author has found the species in a number of localities in north-western Namibia at which it was not recorded before:

- Baynes Mountains, Okavhare River, 8 km south of the Kunene River, 1712BB, July 2005. Two birds heard calling from cliffs above the river.
- Otjihipa Mountains, 4.5 km south of Onyesu and the Kunene River, 1712BA, April 2006. Two birds heard calling from cliffs in the mountain.
- Mikberg, 14 km south of De Riet and the Huab River, 2014CA, October 2006. One bird heard calling from the northern slopes of the mountain.
- Otjihipa Mountains, top of Van Zyl's Pass at view point, 1712DA, May 2007. One bird heard calling.
- Rocky outcrops, 19 km south of Leyland's Drift and the Hoarusib River, 1912DD, January 2012. One bird seen and photographed (Fig.1), roosting on ground amongst boulders in early morning sun.

- Mountains west of Giribesvlakte, 1913AB, May 2012. Two birds heard calling from the mountains.
- Mountains along Hoarusib River, 28 km north north west of Puros, 1812DB, May 2012. Three birds heard calling from the mountainous area adjacent to the river.

Apart from the above-mentioned new records, a Cape Eagle-Owl has been seen and photographed by Adri van der Merwe in the Okavhare River cliffs in the Baynes Mountains in August 2010 (Fig.2). This record is from the same locality as the one by the author in July 2005.



Fig. 1 © Wessel Swanepoel

To date the Otjihipa Mountains record is the closest record of Cape Eagle-Owl to Angola, at only 4.5 km from the common border. It thus seems highly likely that this species will eventually also be found there.

The record by Adri van der Merwe constitutes the sixth substantiated record for Cape Eagle Owl in Namibia and also the northernmost in both Namibia and south-western Africa.

The record south of Leyland's Drift constitutes the seventh substantiated record for Namibia.

Apart from the above-mentioned records, the author has heard Cape Eagle-Owls on numerous occasions at several of the known localities as indicated in the article published in 2003. In the Khan River several birds were heard calling during one night and one bird was seen the following morning. Cape Eagle-Owls are probably more common than realized but due to the preferred habitat in remote areas, they are seldom recorded unless they are calling and the call is recognized as such by observers.

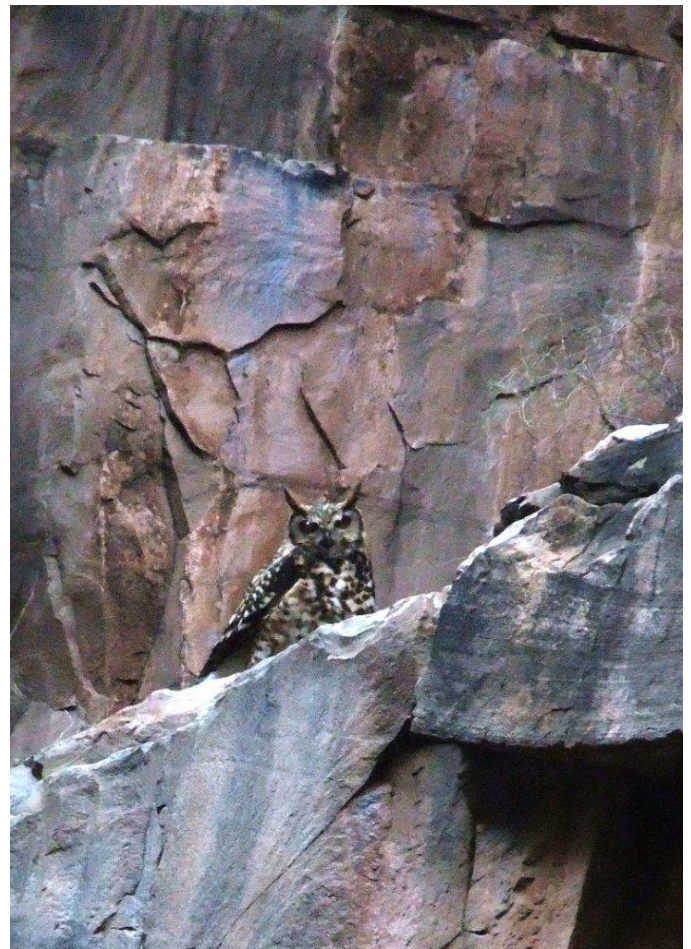


Fig. 2 © Adri van der Merwe

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## **KOAR Winter (July) Wetland Water-bird Counts, Okavango River 2012.**

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All photographs in this article were provided by Mark Paxton ©.

The Okavango River system, about 480 kms of which constitutes the border between Namibia and Angola, has previously been largely neglected in the annual wetland water-bird counts programme conducted throughout Namibia. The exceptions have been the Mahango Game Reserve and a section of the river at Shamvura Camp where voluntary wetland water-bird counts have however been conducted over a consecutive period of 15 years and 11 years respectively. The remainder of the river had been left uncoun- ted until 2012.

KOAR (Kavango Open Africa Route) which is an Open Africa initiative, was formally established in May 2011 with the formation of an association, run by an elected committee and governed by a constitution. The group established a tourist route along the Okavango River from Katwitwi on the Angolan border to Mohembo on the Botswana border. There are now over 40 establishments as members along this route all committed to the conservation principles of the KOAR Association. One of these principles, and indeed a requirement for membership, is the monitoring of the five flagship species. Two of these species are birds and one, the primary species, is a water-bird, the African Skimmer. It was therefore a natural progression for the group to get involved with the annual wetland water-bird census programme.

Consequently, a series of four training courses was conducted by Mark Paxton amongst the member establishments which were suitably situated along the river, and were naturally the tourism operations. The course concentrated specifically on water-bird species and included a formal and strenuous power-point lecture covering all the aspects of a Wetlands International Water-bird Census, together with bird identification exercises.

This grueling “classroom session” was followed by a most welcomed practical session on the river to identify water-birds along defined sections of the river while conducting a trial count. After the completion of the course six areas were defined, with a coordinator chosen for each. Thirty two guides/coordinators from ten tourism establishments completed the course, but the defined count areas incorporated a total of thirteen lodges. Once the course was completed, the various coordinators conducted their own individual counts and their data was submitted through the MET (Ministry of Environment and Tourism) channels to the Netherlands based organization, Wetlands International. These counts now covered over 50 km of the Okavango River previously neglected and unknown.



The schoolmaster

It should be remembered that before this the participants were totally unaware of the wetlands water-bird counting techniques. Their bird identification skills were limited, and the process of data collection an unknown to most.

The turnout for the courses was nevertheless extremely positive, with all being involved in the demanding tourism industry having to go to a fair amount of effort to accommodate the courses and the counts in their extremely busy guest and work schedules.

These counts were a new and welcome change for many of the participants and gave them new insight into the additional values of this

dynamic river system. Some had not appreciated these values before and also got to know their own stretch of river a lot better and in a different way. On the boat they braved the icy cold winter winds bobbing around on waves large enough to surf on, while trying to identify as many obscure “little brown/grey jobs” as possible. Some of the defined areas were in rocky island areas, where the newly emerging rocks, invisible just under the water surface, posed some significant and expensive threats to boat propellers.



Wetlands water-bird count Samsitu June 2012

All have benefitted from the experience and there is a growing appreciation amongst the membership for the value of water-bird counts along this river system. These counts will hopefully be continued and also expanded on to incorporate other areas and members, adding to the coverage of the river.

The results from the counts revealed a total of 3 346 birds of 67 water-birds species.

Some comments and observations:

At this time of the year the water levels are dropping steadily and the floodplains rich with the fruits of the aquatic life breeding season are emptying into the main river system. This creates ideal hunting opportunities for the many heron and stork species which are attracted to the fish and other aquatic life now stranded in the many isolated pools in these drying and diminishing floodplains, or

concentrated at the various inlets along the river banks.

Ospreys which should be migratory during the winter months were nevertheless counted in five of the areas. In the Nunda area during the training course we even saw three birds interacting and spiraling in the air. This may be a consequence of climate change.

African Marsh-Harriers and Marsh Owls were very scarce, only appearing in very low numbers in one and two areas respectively. Both species are dependent on a healthy reed habitat, and uncontrolled fires consistently in this region every year may be destroying habitat and causing a decline of these two sensitive species.

A surprisingly good total of 46 African Skimmers was recorded in four of the six areas and even in the vicinity of Rundu where one would expect human disturbances to exclude them.



African Skimmers

Ducks, normally very threatened by illegal hunting throughout the region, were well represented with relatively large numbers of White-faced Duck and Spur-winged Goose.

White-backed Night-Heron, normally considered a rare or illusive bird and seldom seen was however recorded from five of the six areas.

Other specials particularly for these areas, being communal areas and subjected to a range of human disturbance factors, included

Saddle-billed Stork, Goliath Heron, Slaty Egret, Rufous-bellied Heron, Fulvous Duck, Southern Pochard, African Spoonbill, Lesser Jacana, Lesser Moorhen, Long-toed Lapwing, Half-collared Kingfisher and African Fish-Eagle. Wattled Cranes were recorded in the Nunda area prior to the counts. This is well out of the protection of the Mahango Game Reserve where they are resident in small numbers.



White-backed Night Heron

	BIRDS	SPECIES	DISTANCE km	PARTICIPANTS	HOURS
<b>Ndhovu Area (including Ngepi)</b>	647	34	7	3	4
<b>Nunda Area (including Divava, Shametu and Rainbow)</b>	178	25	5	7	5
<b>RiverDance Area (including Mobola)</b>	102	22	4	4	5
<b>Shamvura Area.</b>	1374	56	15	1	4
<b>Kaisosi Area (including N’Kwazi and Hogo)</b>	236	27	10	5	8.5
<b>Samsitu Area.</b>	807	48	12.5	4	5.5
<b>TOTALS:</b>	3344	n/ a	53.5	24	32

	Ndhovu Area	Nunda Area	RiverDance Area	Shamvura Area	Kaisosi Area	Samsitu	TOTALS
1.Little Grebe			8	6	14	9	37
2.Reed Cormorant	153	33	5	504	1	8	778
3.African Darter	15	7	2	87		4	115
4.Grey Heron	2	2		7		1	30
5.Black-headed Heron		1		4		1	6
6.Goliath Heron	1	1					2
7.Purple Heron	1			7		1	9
8.Great Egret	12			23		5	40
9.Slaty Egret				3	2		5
10.Black Heron				1			1
11.Yellow-billed Egret	5	2		5			12
12.Little Egret	39	10	2	57		1	127
13Cattle Egret	19	4	5	28	6	2	83
14.Squacco Heron	69	3	1	87	7	1	177
15.Rufous-bellied Heron	5			5	7	8	25
16.Green-backed Heron	29	12	2	10	6	3	94
17.Black- crowned Night- Heron	1	23		1	13	7	111
18.White- backed Night- Heron	5		2	2	4	2	15
19.Little Bittern	3		1	3	3	5	15
20.Dwarf Bittern			2		3		5
21.Yellow-billed Stork				8		2	35
22.African Openbill				5	26	5	81
23.Saddle-billed Stork	1						1
24.African Sacred Ibis	20			8	2	1	31
25.Glossy Ibis				3			3

	<b>Ndhovu Area</b>	<b>Nunda Area</b>	<b>RiverDance Area</b>	<b>Shamvura Area</b>	<b>Kaisosi Area</b>	<b>Samsitu</b>	<b>TOTALS</b>
26.African Spoonbill	18					4	22
27.Hamerkop	1	3	2	2	1	4	13
28.Fulvous Duck						2	2
29.White-faced Duck			46	270		1	416
30.White-backed Duck			1			2	3
31.Spur-winged Goose	56			2		1	77
32.Comb Duck		2		6		9	17
33.Egyptian Goose	2						2
34.African Pygmy-Goose				8			8
35.Red-billed Teal	2	14		2	20	3	77
36.Southern Pochard						2	29
37.African Rail				2		1	3
38.Black Crake	20	7	2	3	21	2	77
39.Common Moorhen				1		4	5
40.Lesser Moorhen				1			1
41.African Purple Swamphen				10		1	11
42.Lesser Jacana		3		1	4	3	11
43.African Jacana	26	3	2	42	13	6	151
44.Black-winged Stilt		4	2	15			21
45.Water Thick-knee	11	2		4	17	8	42
46.Collared Pratincole				12			12
47.Long-toed Lapwing	3			2		5	10
48.Blacksmith Lapwing	29	16	1	18	14	2	98

	<b>Ndhovu Area</b>	<b>Nunda Area</b>	<b>RiverDance Area</b>	<b>Shamvura Area</b>	<b>Kaisosi Area</b>	<b>Samsitu</b>	<b>TOTALS</b>
49.African Wattled Lapwing	5		4	10		4	23
50.Common Ringed Plover						1	1
51.Kittlitz's Plover				2			2
52.Three-banded Plover				2	4		6
53.White-fronted Plover				2			2
54.Common Greenshank	1			5		1	7
55.Wood Sandpiper				3			3
56.Common Sandpiper				2	4	1	7
57.African Snipe				1		1	2
58.Whiskered Tern				6			6
59.African Skimmer	7	3		24		1	46
60.Osprey		1	1	1	1	1	5
61.African Fish-Eagle	7		2	5	2	3	19
62.African Marsh-Harrier				1			1
63.Marsh Owl		4				2	6
64.Pied Kingfisher	59	15	7	37	27	4	194
65.Giant Kingfisher	2	2	2	1	6	1	25
66.Malachite Kingfisher	18	2		7	8	9	44
67.Half-collared Kingfisher						1	1
<b>TOTALS:</b>	<b>647</b>	<b>179</b>	<b>102</b>	<b>1374</b>	<b>236</b>	<b>808</b>	<b>3346</b>



## A Spectacular Day at Namibia's Coastal Birding Mecca

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All photographs in this article are © Otto Schmidt.

At 8 am on the morning of Sunday, 7 October 2012, our group of four Cape Bird Club members (Johan Schlebusch, Joy Fish, Sandy and Otto Schmidt) met Mark Boorman outside our Walvis Bay hotel for a day's birding.

As we headed for the lagoon nearby, Mark asked if we had been on the birdnet since we left Cape Town. We said "No, why?" He then told us that a Black Skimmer *Rynchops niger*, the first confirmed record for Africa, had been present at Rietvlei just outside Cape Town on the Thursday and Friday just before. Our immediate thoughts were, "What are we doing here, when this mega rarity is just down the road from home!"

However, the local birds awaited us and a few minutes later we stopped along the Walvis Bay Promenade to look at the Greater Flamingos and a selection of waders around a sandbar a short distance away. A few minutes later Sandy exclaimed "What's that bird that has just landed on the sandbar?"

We thought Mark was going to have a fit as he realised it was a Black Skimmer. As the bird at Rietvlei had not been seen on the Saturday, despite a large number of local and upcountry birders scouring the area, this could mean that "our" bird had flown due north about 1 600 kilometres since Friday evening to land right in front of us at about 08h25 on the Sunday morning.

Modern technology immediately kicked in and both local and more distant birders were informed of this mega event, with several local birders deserting their families and Sunday morning breakfast tables to arrive at the lagoon within minutes.



Black Skimmer

After taking in this unexpected bonus for some time, we decided to head on and within a few minutes were enjoying the second rarity of the day, an American Golden Plover in full breeding plumage.

So the day continued, as we spotted a number of Red-necked Phalaropes near the saltworks. Eventually, Mark also found us a Red Phalarope, identified by its thicker bill, the third lifer of the morning for most of our group. In a tern roost we noted an Arctic Tern with its very short legs amongst the many Common Terns, and close views of Chestnut-banded Plovers amongst the many migrant waders were a delight and provided great photographic opportunities.



American Golden Plover

Near the lagoon's pump station there were again large numbers of terns, and Mark pointed out a couple of the slightly darker and smaller Black Terns amongst the throng, the first arrivals of the summer. Here we also had our only Damara Tern which flew over us carrying a fish. Greater and Lesser Flamingos were everywhere, and a couple of resident black-backed jackals seemed to be doing quite well preying on these. Numbers of African Black Oystercatchers, Great White Pelicans and a group of Eurasian Curlews swelled our bird-list as we enjoyed the spectacle.



Chestnut-banded Plover



Red Phalarope

Eventually we headed back towards town for another look at the American Golden Plover and the still-present Black Skimmer, which had now attracted some more local birders, before we headed towards Swakopmund. En route we stopped off at a coastal development to add Red Knot to our wader list for the day.

The next stop was the Mile 4 Saltworks just north of Swakopmund, where a similar spectacle of birds awaited us, but with fewer species and numbers than at Walvis Bay.

A brief view of a Peregrine Falcon (probably one of the Palearctic *calidus* migrant subspecies according to Mark) with its dinner was a surprise.

We also managed to photograph a ringed and flagged Sandwich Tern which has since been confirmed to have been ringed in Holland (**NV7** ringed as a nearly fledged juvenile on 19 June 2012 at de Scheelhoekeilanden, near Stellendam, Zuid-Holland) (*Direct distance from the ringing site approximately 8 330 km – Ed*).

Then we were fortunate to find the leucistic Common Redshank which had been in the area for a while and had great views of this attractively marked individual; our 5<sup>th</sup> rarity of a remarkable day.



Ringed Sandwich Tern

## Trends in Namibian Waterbird Populations 9 :

### Waders and Shorebirds - Part 1

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Leucistic Common Redshank

However, there was more to come as we headed inland a short distance and came across a foraging group of the endemic Gray's Lark, another lifer for most of us, and were shown the very pale, almost white, form of the Tractrac Chat found in this very harsh environment. Now birded out, we said farewell and a big "Thank you" to Mark and headed for a celebratory dinner in Swakopmund at the end of an extraordinary day's birding.

The next (Monday) morning on our way inland we stopped briefly to confirm that the Black Skimmer was still present. The bird did a fly-past including a bit of skimming for a great finale.

It had been confirmed when seen in flight the previous day to be of the same (North American) sub-species as the one seen near Cape Town, almost certainly confirming that this was the same individual.

We later heard that it stayed until the Wednesday, allowing a group of twitchers who had flown to Cape Town the previous Saturday and missed it to make a second trip and connect with it this time.

The following is a summary of waterbird count data for selected species in Namibia, covering the period 1977 to December 2008.

For each species the Red Data Book (RDB) status, both global and Namibian, is given, the population trend as per Wetlands International, the number of times the species was counted, the number of times it has passed the 1% population criterion, the maximum count and the sites where it has passed the 1% population criterion.

The local trend is calculated using the computer programme TRIM (see an earlier publication for the selection criteria and methods) (*Lanioturdus* 43 (2) - Ed.). Population trends are graphically presented as indices relative to a base year (in this case 1991) and thus all have a value of 1 for 1991.

Thus an index value of 2 indicates a doubling of the population relative to 1991 and an index of 0.5 would mean half of the 1991 figure. A slope value of 1 would indicate a perfectly stable population, whereas any value above 1 means a positive trend and a value of less than 1 a negative trend.

(Larger scale replications of the graphs in this article are attached to the end of this edition).

## 9.1 African Black Oystercatcher (*Haematopus moquini*)<sup>1</sup>



Photo © Eckart Demasius

IUCN RDB Status: Near Threatened  
 Namibia RDB Status: Near Threatened  
 WI Trend: Increasing

This southern African breeding endemic is locally common from Lüderitz southwards with a healthy population at Walvis Bay. This bird has profited from the invasion of the coastline by the alien mussel *Mytilus galloprovincialis* which resulted in a steady food supply and hence increased breeding success.

No of times counted: 139  
 No of times past 1% population (=55): 57  
 Maximum count: 622 at Lüderitz Peninsula on 15 January 1996  
 Past 1% population at: Lüderitz Peninsula (22), Sandwich Harbour (2), Walvis Bay (33)

### Trend analysis

Number of sites:	4
Number of observed counts:	62
Number of missing counts:	10
Total number of counts:	72

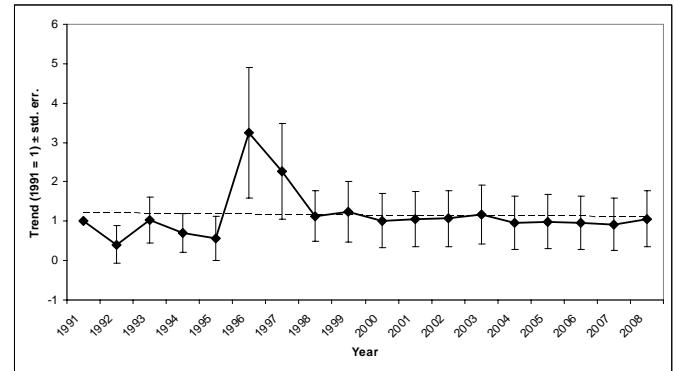
Sites containing more than 10% of the total count:

Site	Number	%
Lüderitz Peninsula	2297	44.7

<sup>1</sup> Names follow Hockey, P.A.R., Dean, W.R.J. and Ryan, P.G. (eds) 2005. *Roberts – Birds of Southern Africa, VIIth Edition*. The Trustees of the John Voelcker Bird Book Fund, Cape Town, South Africa.

Sandwich Harbour	550	10.7
Walvis Bay	2196	42.7

Overall slope: Uncertain  
 1.0103 ±0.0357



**Figure 1 : Trend of African Black Oystercatcher in Namibia from 1991 to 2008.**

## 9.2 Black-winged Stilt (*Himantopus himantopus*)



Photo © Eckart Demasius

IUCN RDB Status: Least concern  
 Namibia RDB Status: ?  
 WI Trend: Increasing

This wader is fairly common worldwide and has benefited from the proliferation of artificial wetlands such as sewage works and water storage dams. This is probably the reason why this population is increasing in Namibia.

No of times counted: 358  
 No of times past 1% population (=230): 35  
 Maximum count: 1086 at Walvis Bay on 15 July 2007

Past 1% population at: Fischer's Pan (1), Lake Oponono (12), Tsumkwe Pans (7), Walvis Bay (15)

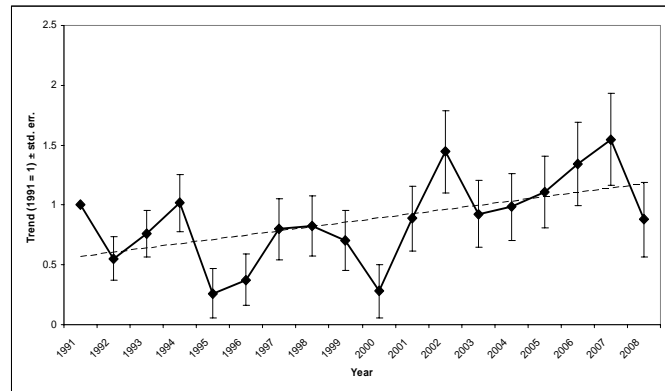
*Trend analysis*

Number of sites: 20  
 Number of observed counts: 267  
 Number of missing counts: 93  
 Total number of counts: 360

Sites containing more than 10% of the total count:

Site	Number	%
Lake Oponono	4166	25.1
Tsumkwe Pans	2887	17.4
Walvis Bay	5699	34.3

Overall slope: Moderate increase (p<0.05)  
 1.0444 ±0.0177



**Figure 2 : Trend of Black-winged Stilt population in Namibia from 1991 to 2008.**

**9.3 Pied Avocet (*Recurvirostra avosetta*)**



Photo © Eckart Demasius

IUCN RDB Status: Least concern  
 Namibia RDB Status: ?  
 WI Trend: Increasing

This is one of the more common waders in Namibia, especially on the central coast and on some of the large dams inland. It is also one of the birds that has benefited from the proliferation of artificial wetlands and hence shows an increasing trend.

No of times counted: 342  
 No of times past 1% population (=190): 72  
 Maximum count: 4175 at Walvis Bay on 30 July 2006  
 Past 1% population at: Ekuma River (1), Fischer's Pan (1), Lake Oponono (8), Mile 4 Saltworks (3), Sandwich Harbour (19), Walvis Bay (40)

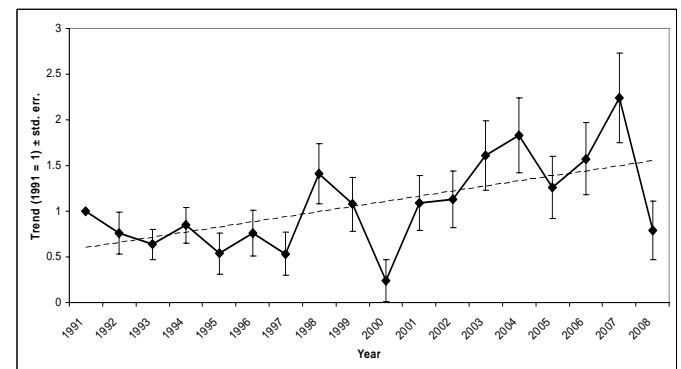
*Trend analysis*

Number of sites: 16  
 Number of observed counts: 215  
 Number of missing counts: 73  
 Total number of counts: 288

Sites containing more than 10% of the total count:

Site	Number	%
Sandwich Harbour	13461	23.5
Walvis Bay	33803	59.0

Overall slope: Moderate increase (p<0.01)  
 1.0487 ±0.0123



**Figure 3 : Trend of Pied Avocet population in Namibia from 1991 to 2008.**

## 9.4 Water Thick-knee (*Burhinus vermiculatus*)



Photo © Eckart Demasius

IUCN RDB Status: Least concern

Namibia RDB Status: ?

WI Trend: Unknown

This bird is common in the Caprivi and regularly encountered in the seasonally flooded *oshanas* of north-central Namibia. Its shy and secretive nature probably accounts for the low numbers counted.

No of times counted: 45

No of times past 1% population (=1000): 0

Maximum count: 80 at Mahango Game Reserve on 6 January 1999

Past 1% population at: Nowhere

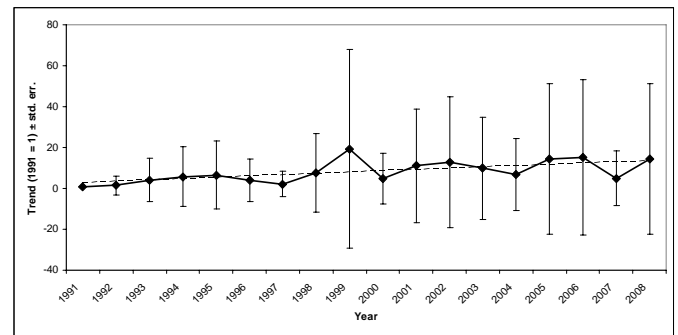
### *Trend analysis*

Number of sites:	3
Number of observed counts:	44
Number of missing counts:	10
Total number of counts:	54

Sites containing more than 10% of the total count:

Site	Number	%
Mahango Game Res 507		92.5

Overall slope: Uncertain  
1.1153 ±0.0658



**Figure 4 : Trend of Water Thick-knee population in Namibia from 1991 to 2008.**

## 9.5 Blacksmith Lapwing (*Vanellus armatus*)



Photo © Eckart Demasius

IUCN RDB Status: Least concern

Namibia RDB Status: ?

WI Trend: Increasing

This is probably the most commonly encountered wader in Namibia and it too has benefited from the increase in artificial wetlands.

No of times counted: 606

No of times past 1% population (=10000): 0

Maximum count: 386 at Tsumkwe Pans on 19 April 1993

Past 1% population at: Nowhere

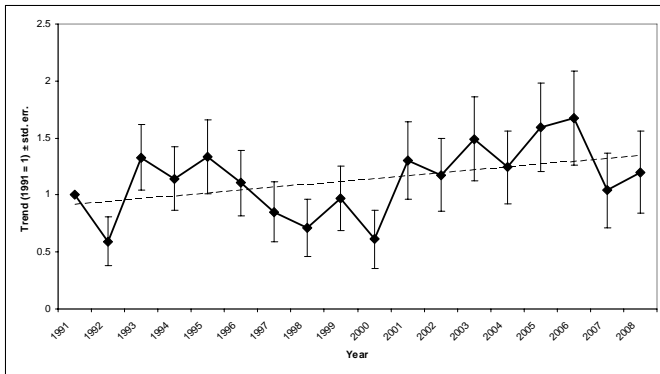
### *Trend analysis*

Number of sites:	20
Number of observed counts:	272
Number of missing counts:	88
Total number of counts:	360

Sites containing more than 10% of the total count:

Site	Number	%
Mahango Game Res	1919	26.1
Tsumkwe Pans	1754	23.8

Overall slope: Uncertain  
1.0235 ±0.0145



**Figure 5 : Trend of Blacksmith Lapwing population in Namibia from 1991 to 2008.**

### 9.6 Crowned Lapwing (*Vanellus coronatus*)



Photo © Eckart Demasius

IUCN RDB Status: Least concern  
Namibia RDB Status: ?  
WI Trend: Unknown

This lapwing is mostly confined to inland Namibia where it is regularly seen during bird counts.

No of times counted: 50  
No of times past 1% population (=6500): 0  
Maximum count: 102 at Fischer's Pan on 22 January 2004  
Past 1% population at: Nowhere

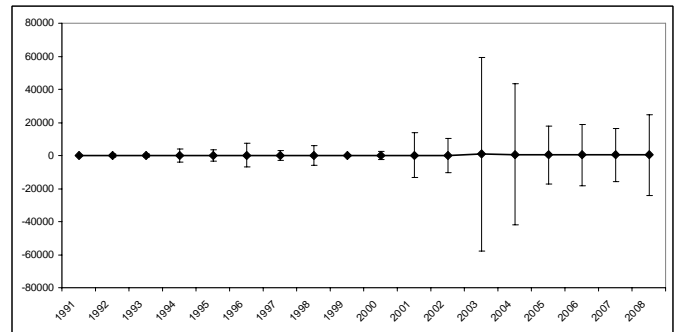
#### Trend analysis

Number of sites:	4
Number of observed counts:	56
Number of missing counts:	16
Total number of counts:	72

Sites containing more than 10% of the total count:

Site	Number	%
Fischer's Pan	241	49.8
Mahango Game Res	97	20.0
Tsumkwe Pans	129	26.7

Overall slope: Uncertain  
1.2874 ±1.5411



**Figure 6 : Trend of Crowned Lapwing population in Namibia from 1991 to 2008.**

### 9.7 African Wattled Lapwing (*Vanellus senegallus*)



Photo © Neil Thomson

IUCN RDB Status: Least concern  
 Namibia RDB Status: ?  
 WI Trend: Stable

This wader is restricted to the Caprivi in Namibia where it is common but never occurs in large flocks. One bird was reported from Walvis Bay in 1998.

No of times counted: 57  
 No of times past 1% population (=1000): 0  
 Maximum count: 91 at Shamvura, Okavango River, on 12 February 2005  
 Past 1% population at: Nowhere

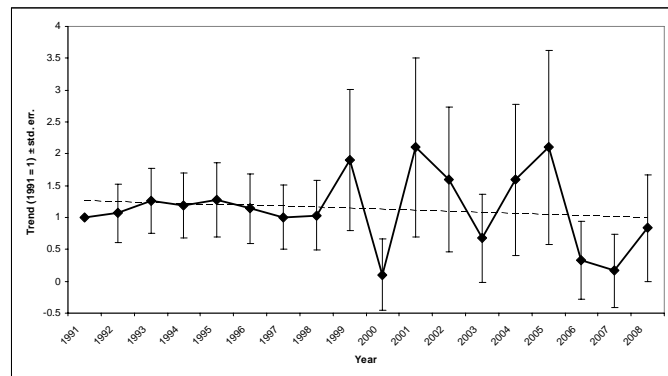
*Trend analysis*

Number of sites: 3  
 Number of observed counts: 43  
 Number of missing counts: 11  
 Total number of counts: 54

Sites containing more than 10% of the total count:

Site	Number	%
Mahango Game Res	186	32.7
Shamvura	365	64.3

Overall slope: Uncertain  
 0.9569 ±0.0678



**Figure 7 : Trend of African Wattled Lapwing population in Namibia from 1991 to 2008.**

**9.8 Grey Plover (Pluvialis squatarola)**



Photo © Eckart Demasius

IUCN RDB Status: Least concern  
 Namibia RDB Status: ?  
 WI Trend: Unknown

This is a common Holarctic breeding migrant to the Namibian coast with large numbers regularly recorded at Sandwich Harbour and Walvis Bay.

No of times counted: 212  
 No of times past 1% population (=900): 14  
 Maximum count: 3362 at Walvis Bay on 15 May 1983  
 Past 1% population at: Sandwich Harbour (1), Walvis Bay (13)

*Trend analysis*

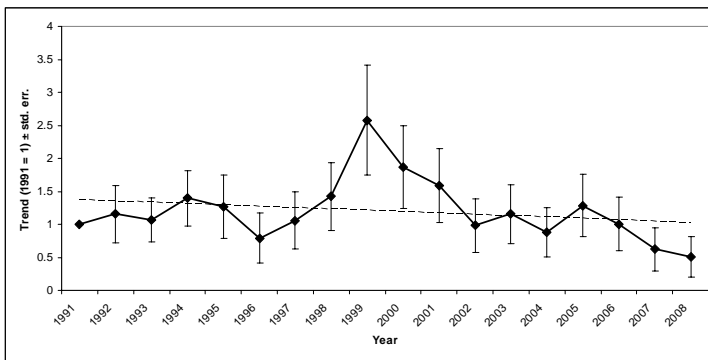
Number of sites: 8  
 Number of observed counts: 112  
 Number of missing counts: 32  
 Total number of counts: 144

Sites containing more than 10% of the total count:

Site	Number	%
Sandwich Harbour	7354	25.2
Walvis Bay	19856	67.9

Overall slope: Uncertain  
 0.9763 ±0.0173





**Figure 8 : Trend of Grey Plover population in Namibia from 1991 to 2008.**

#### References:

IUCN 2009. IUCN Red List of Threatened Species. Version 2009.1 [www.iucnredlist.org](http://www.iucnredlist.org)  
 Wetlands International. 2006. *Waterbird Population Estimates – Fourth Edition*. S. Delany and D. Scott (Eds.), Wetlands International, Wageningen, The Netherlands

Simmons, R.E. and Brown, C.J. In press. *Birds to watch in Namibia: red, rare and endemic species*. Ministry of Environment and Tourism and Namibia Nature Foundation, Windhoek.

### Atlas Update

These are exciting times we are living in – bird distributions are changing and SABAP2 is an ideal opportunity to use and improve your birding skills and to help remap the distribution of our birds.

In response to Holger Kolberg’s post on Facebook when Namibia went past 200 pentads atlased, Les Underhill posted the following :- “When the enormous amount of ad hoc data is added to the full protocol lists for Namibia progress is really good – while full protocol lists remain the first prize ad hoc lists are really valuable to provide basic data for all thinly covered areas such as Namibia, and in South Africa for much of the Northern Cape and other thinly covered areas.”

There we have it again – if you are unable to spend the full two hours atlasing please submit your ad hoc list anyway – this data is also valuable.

Namibia comprises 10 584 pentads. This is more than double the number of pentads incorporated in the largest region in South Africa (Northern Cape 5 103 pentads). South Africa, Lesotho and Swaziland have been atlasing for over five years now while the atlas has been going in Namibia for less than one year. I am pleased to be able to say that on 08/10/2012 the number of records (sightings) submitted by Namibian atlasers (11 039) overtook the number (11 036) submitted by atlasers for Lesotho although at that stage they had submitted more full protocol cards than we had. On 13/12/2012 we achieved 2% coverage – 212 pentads. This has taken a bit over six months – according to Les Underhill it took the Northern Cape, the largest of the South African provinces (which has less than half the number of pentads we have) a full year to achieve their 2% mark. At the same time we were only 4 cards behind Lesotho (394 vs 398). On 15/12/2012 we equaled the number of cards submitted for Lesotho (398).

On 14/01/2013 we passed 20 000 records on full protocol cards. By 04/02/2013 a total of 529 full protocol atlas cards for 278 pentads comprising 23 371 accepted records had been submitted. This constitutes some full protocol coverage for about 2.6% of the pentads in Namibia. I am also pleased to be able to say that quite a number of ad hoc lists and incidental sightings have been submitted. The maps of Namibia on the ADU website are starting to “gain a bit of colour”.

The next target we should be looking at closing in on is Swaziland. The atlasers there have submitted 49 418 records on 740 full protocol cards so we have a fair way to go to overtake them. Let’s make the most of the summer season and get as many of those migrants into our data base as possible before they depart again.

It is hoped that more atlas workshops will be presented in the near future and hopefully we will be able to get more of our members on board to participate in this worthwhile project. Believe me – “birding with a purpose” is fun.  
 Neil Thomson

## Rarities and Interesting Observations

First an older record that has just recently come to my attention. On 13 & 14/11/2011 Joe Gross photographed a Slaty Egret at Monte Christo. To the best of my knowledge this is only the third record of this species in central Namibia. A bird was photographed at Daan Viljoen Game Reserve in 2008 (see *Lanioturdus* 41(1)) and one was photographed at Otjivero Dam in 2011 (see *Lanioturdus* 44(4)).



Slaty Egret – Photo © Joe Gross

Mrs T Malan atlased a Burchell's Coucal at Auob Lodge north of Gochas on 15/09/2012. This is another species which has not previously been recorded in Namibia but perhaps this is not such a strange sighting as there are historical records of a White-browed Coucal at Monte Christo and a Senegal Coucal near Hosea Kutako International Airport both very far from their recorded ranges.

The two Greater Flamingos reported at Sossusvlei (see *Lanioturdus* 45(4)) were still present on 17/09/2012. On 01/10/2012 only the juvenile bird was still present.

Stefan Rust reported two Black Storks from the Henno Martin Shelter area of the Kuiseb Canyon on 19/09/2012.

An American Golden Plover still wearing most of its breeding plumage was found just south of Lover's Hill, Walvis Bay, on 25/09/2012 by Sean Braine and photographed the following day by Mark Boorman.



American Golden Plover – Photo : © Mark Boorman

Mark Boorman reported a Great White Pelican with the Canadian ring YN seen at Walvis Bay on 09/10/2012. This bird was ringed by Dirk Heinrich at Hardap Dam on 25/05/2008.

On 12/10/2012 a Little Bittern, a Pied Kingfisher and at least two Greater Painted-Snipe were seen at Monte Christo. These are all uncommon species in central Namibia although there have been a number of sightings of Pied Kingfisher from various locations around Windhoek in recent times.

Holger Kolberg photographed a Brown Snake-Eagle at Ganab on 13/10/2012. In terms of the SABAP1 distributions this bird seems to be well to the south west of its recorded range.



Brown Snake-Eagle – Photo : © Holger Kolberg

The Namibia Bird Club morning walk at the Gammams Sewage Works on 14/10/2012 produced sightings of a single Little Bittern and a single Pied Kingfisher.

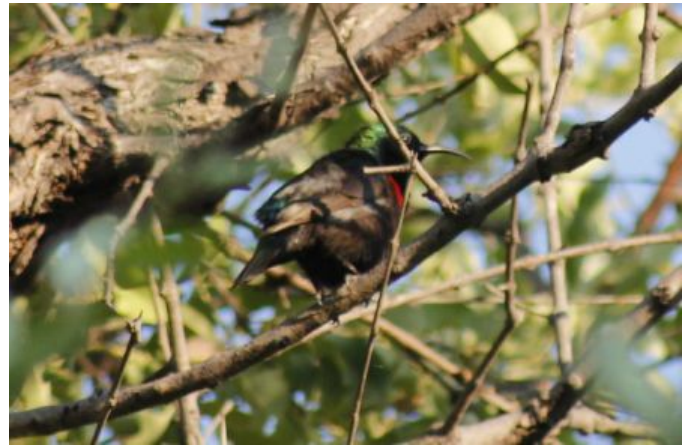
Otto Schmidt reported at least three Baillon's Crakes well as numbers of White-face Ducks near Mariental on 14 & 15/10/2012. The crakes are seldom seen although may well be more common than is generally believed. White-faced Ducks are uncommon in central Namibia.



Baillon's Crake – Photo : © Otto Schmidt

Stefan Rust reported a Red-billed Oxpecker seen at Klein Namutoni on 16/10/2012. This bird is a long way west of the recorded (SABAP1) range for this species but Red-billed Oxpeckers were relocated to the Otavi area a few years ago. It seems most likely that this bird has its origins in the relocated population.

In the second week of November Richard Niddrie and Christiane Maluche reported Shelley's Sunbird at Mahangu Safari Lodge near Divundu on the Okavango River. Other interesting birds seen by them in this area included Wattled Crane, White-backed Night-Heron and Slaty Egret.



Shelley's Sunbird – Photo : © Christiane Maluche

Eckart Demasius reported Wilson's Phalarope, American Golden Plover and Red-necked Phalarope at Walvis Bay on the weekend of 17 & 18/11/2012.



American Golden Plover – Photo : © Eckart Demasius

On 17/11/2012 Gudrun and I saw four Black Storks and two Greater Painted-Snipe at Onganja Mine east of Okahandja. These are both uncommon species in central Namibia.

Stefan Rust reported a Souza's Shrike seen 25 km west of Katima Mulilo on 23/11/2012. This inconspicuous species is possibly more common close to some of our northern borders than is generally thought.

Jennie Lates reported a Long-crested Eagle seen in a river bed behind Hochland Park, Windhoek on 24/11/2012. This bird is a very long way off its recorded range.



Long-crested Eagle in Windhoek- Photo : © Michael Houlden



Juvenile Red-footed Falcon – Photo : © Jessica Kemper

The Namibia Bird Club's Birding Big Day atlas challenge on 25/11/2012 at Monte Christo turned up further sightings of Greater Painted-Snipe while the Woodland Kingfishers have again returned to this location well south of their normal range. This time it seems that at least four birds (possibly six) are present. In addition a Pied Kingfisher and a Little Bittern were also seen again (see above).

Jessica Kemper reported a juvenile Red-footed Falcon just outside Lüderitz on 29/11/2012. This bird seems to be a long way off its recorded range although this sighting was not without some controversy as opinion was divided as to whether this was indeed a juvenile Red-footed Falcon or a juvenile Amur Falcon. Trevor Hardaker posted it on SA Rare Bird News Reports as an immature Red-footed Falcon.

Helmut zur Strassen reported three Horus Swifts in Klein Windhoek in the last week of November.

On 30/11/2012 there was another sighting of an African Harrier-Hawk hunting swifts in a palm tree in Suiderhof, this time by Johan and Roline Fourie.



African Harrier\_Hawk – Photo : © Johan Fourie

Phil Palmer reported some interesting sightings in Namibia at the end of November/beginning of December 2012. Starting with the Wilson's Phalarope, 45 Red-necked Phalaropes and two Terek Sandpipers at Walvis Bay on 28/11/2012 and followed by male Pallid and Montagu's Harriers at Okondeka in the Etosha National Park on 01/12/2012. Further unusual sightings included a Gull-billed Tern at Andoni on 04/12/2012 and African Crake, Lesser Moorhen, Malachite Kingfisher, seven Greater Painted-Snipe and an Amur Falcon in the company of Lesser Kestrels at Namutoni on 04 & 05/12/2012.

Jo Tagg reported a probable juvenile African Harrier-Hawk seen on 05/12/2012 and again on 11/12/2012 in Klein Windhoek. This may indicate that there is a breeding pair in the vicinity of the city although all sightings of which I am aware have, to date, been of single birds.

The Namibia Bird Club's morning walk at the Gammams Sewage Works on 09/12/2012 produced another fleeting glimpse of a little Bittern.

Eckart Demasius photographed a Gull-billed Tern at Walvis Bay on 16/12/2012.



Gull-billed Tern – Photo : © Eckart Demasius

Also on 16/12/2012 Ute von Ludwiger photographed an African Crake at Chudop waterhole in the Etosha National Park. It is very unusual to see this species in the open like this.



African Crake – Photo : Ute von Ludwiger

On 19/12/2012 Gudrun and I saw a Senegal Coucal at Namutoni which seems to be some distance from its recorded (SABAP1) range.

In addition Trevor Hardaker's SA Rare Bird News Reports mention the following rarities etc. seen in Namibia since mid September 2012.

Further sightings of Angola Cave Chat were reported from the Zebra Mountains on the third weekend in September (see *Lanioturdus* 45(4)).

According to the report dated 24/09/2012 at least one Red Phalarope had been seen amongst small groups of Red-necked Phalaropes at Walvis Bay.

In the last week of September the leucistic Common Redshank was still present at Mile 4 Saltworks while several Red-necked Phalaropes were to be seen at Walvis Bay.

On Sunday 07/10/2012 a "Mega Alert" was put out as Mark Boorman and Otto Schmidt had found a Black Skimmer at Walvis Bay. This sighting came only a few days after the first confirmed record of this American species in southern Africa when a bird was seen at Rietvlei near Cape Town. It is thought that the Walvis Bay bird could be the same individual last seen near Cape Town on the evening of 05/10/2012. By the morning of 10/10/2012 the bird had disappeared. There have been at least two previously unaccepted records of

this species – one from Rundu in the mid 1980's and one from Walvis Bay in 1998.



Black Skimmer at Walvis Bay – Photo : © John Paterson

It was reported on 08/10/2012 that in addition to the Black Skimmer, the American Golden Plover, several Red-necked Phalaropes and the single Red Phalarope were still present at Walvis Bay while the leucistic Common Redshank was again seen at Mile 4 Saltworks.

On 29/10/2012 it was reported that the Wilson's Phalarope (see *Lanioturdus* 45(4)) was still present at Walvis Bay together with at least forty Red-necked Phalaropes while a Great Egret was seen at the lagoon in the vicinity of Lover's Hill.

The partially leucistic Common Redshank at Mile 4 Saltworks was mentioned again in the report dated 05/11/2012. This bird had by

then been present at this location for over a year.

An American Golden Plover was reported at Mile 4 Saltworks on 17/11/2012.



American Golden Plover – Photo © Eckart Demasius

It was reported that a Gull-billed Tern had been seen on 13/12/2012 on the Andoni Plains in the Etosha National Park (see also above).

In the final report for 2012 dated 31/12/2012 a Pectoral Sandpiper was reported from Rietfontein Waterhole in the Etosha National Park.

Neil Thomson

### **About the Namibia Bird Club**

The Namibia Bird Club was founded in 1962 and has been active since then. We organize monthly visits to interesting birding sites around Windhoek as well as regular visits to Avis Dam and the Gammams Sewage Works and occasional weekend trips further afield.

Experienced birders are more than happy to help beginners and novices on these outings. If you have a transport problem or would like to share transport please contact a committee member. Depending on the availability of speakers and suitable material we have lecture or video evenings at the Namibia Scientific Society premises. Members receive a programme of forthcoming events (*Namibia Bird News*) and the Bird Club journal, *Lanioturdus*.

## Namibia Bird Club Committee 2012

Gudrun Middendorff (Chairperson)  
Tel : 081 240 3635

Jutta Surèn (Treasurer)  
Tel : 061 24 1382 (home)

Liz Komen (Planning and Education)  
Tel : 061 26 4409 (home)

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Holger Kolberg (Editor *Namibia Bird News*)  
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Sonja Bartlewski (Member) Tel : 081 149 2313

Richard Niddrie (Member) Tel : 061 233 892  
(home)

Uschi Kirchner (Member) Tel : 081 314 4130  
Nacho Aransay (Member) Tel : 081 685 3728

## Membership Fees 2013

Members have been able to receive a discounted subscription to the *Africa Birds and Birding* magazine. This publication has been discontinued and the committee is investigating the possibility of obtaining bulk subscriptions to either *Africa Geographic* magazine which now incorporates birding articles or *African Birdlife*, a new birding publication that is being produced by BirdLife South Africa.

### Category

Single member  
N\$ 140  
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N\$ 160  
Junior member (All scholars and students)  
N\$ 90  
Pensioner  
N\$ 100  
Foreign member (Not resident in Namibia)  
N\$ 165  
Corporate membership  
N\$ 700

## The Raptor Research Foundation's Leslie Brown Memorial Grant 2014

In memory of one of the most inspired and productive raptor conservation biologists of recent decades, the Raptor Research Foundation, Inc. announces the availability of this grant, for up to \$1,400, to provide financial assistance to promote the research and/or the dissemination of information on African birds of prey. Applications that do not focus on African raptors will be considered *non-responsive* and will not be further reviewed for funding.

**Applicants must provide: (1) a brief resume, (2) study plan with specific objectives, (3) an account of how funds will be spent, and (4) an indication of how the proposed work would relate to other work by the applicant and to other existing and/or applied for sources of funding (if applicable). The entire package should not exceed 5 pages.**

Deadline: A complete application must be received by the abstract submission deadline for the [annual conference](#). This year, it's May 31, 2013. Cheques will be distributed directly after the annual conference (typically September/October each year).

Submittals can be in email or hard copy format. Proposals, donations, and inquiries about tax-exempt contributions to the fund should be sent or emailed to:

Jeffrey L. Lincer, Ph.D.,

Executive Director, RICA **Researchers  
Implementing Conservation Action, Inc.,**

**Research Associate,  
San Diego Natural History Museum**

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# Trends in Namibian Waterbird Populations 9 : Waders and Shorebirds - Part 1

## 9.1 African Black Oystercatcher (*Haematopus moquini*)

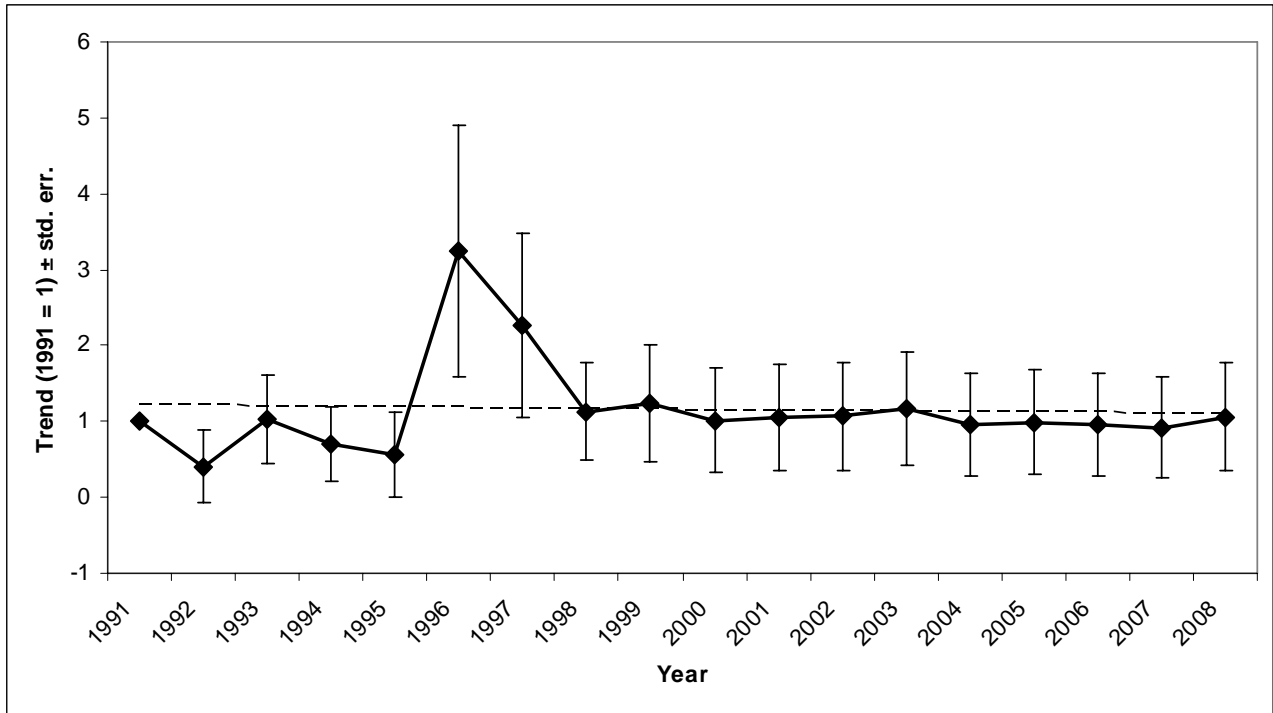


Figure 1 : Trend of African Black Oystercatcher in Namibia from 1991 to 2008.

## 9.2 Black-winged Stilt (*Himantopus himantopus*)

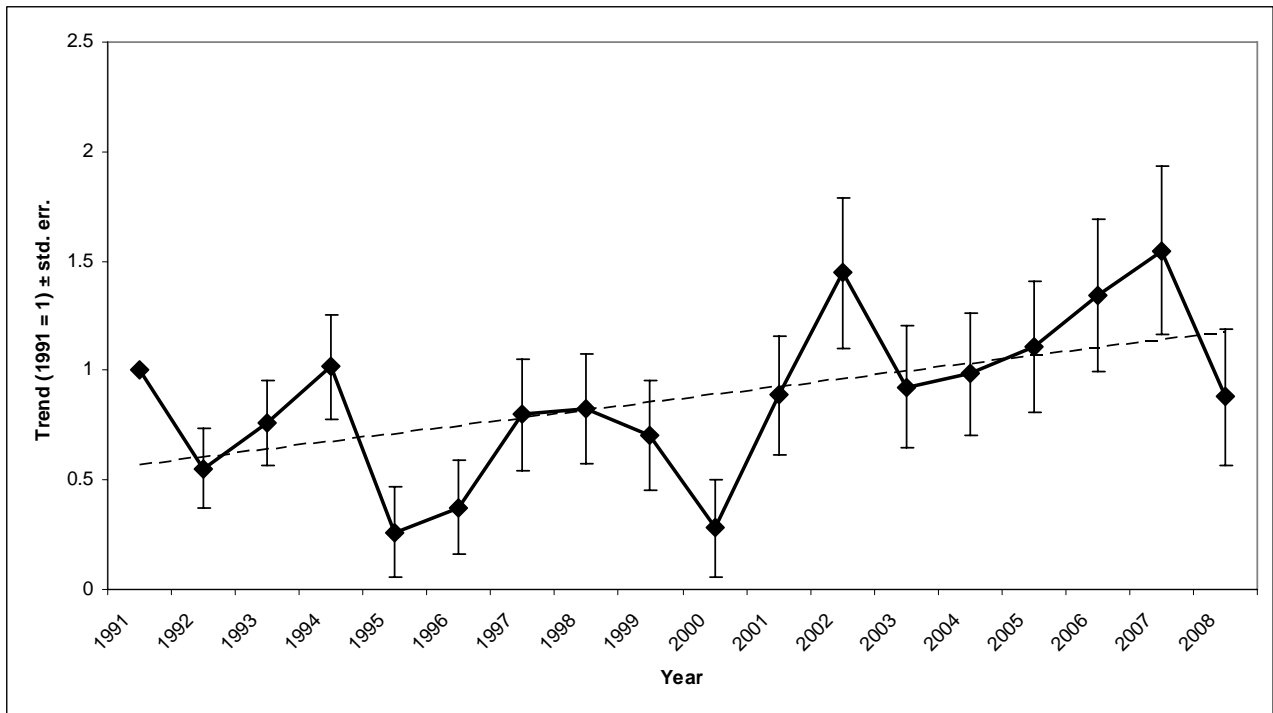


Figure 2 : Trend of Black-winged Stilt population in Namibia from 1991 to 2008.

### 9.3 Pied Avocet (*Recurvirostra avocetta*)

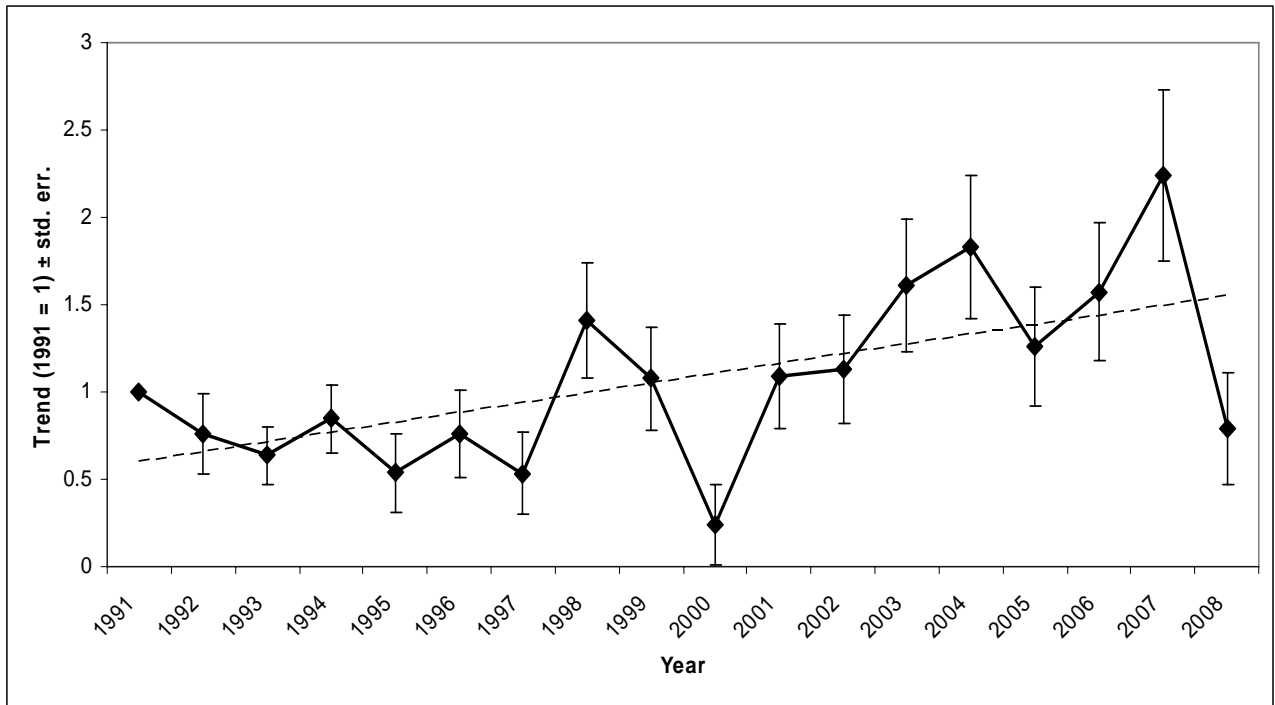


Figure 3 : Trend of Pied Avocet population in Namibia from 1991 to 2008.

### 9.4 Water Thick-knee (*Burhinus vermiculatus*)

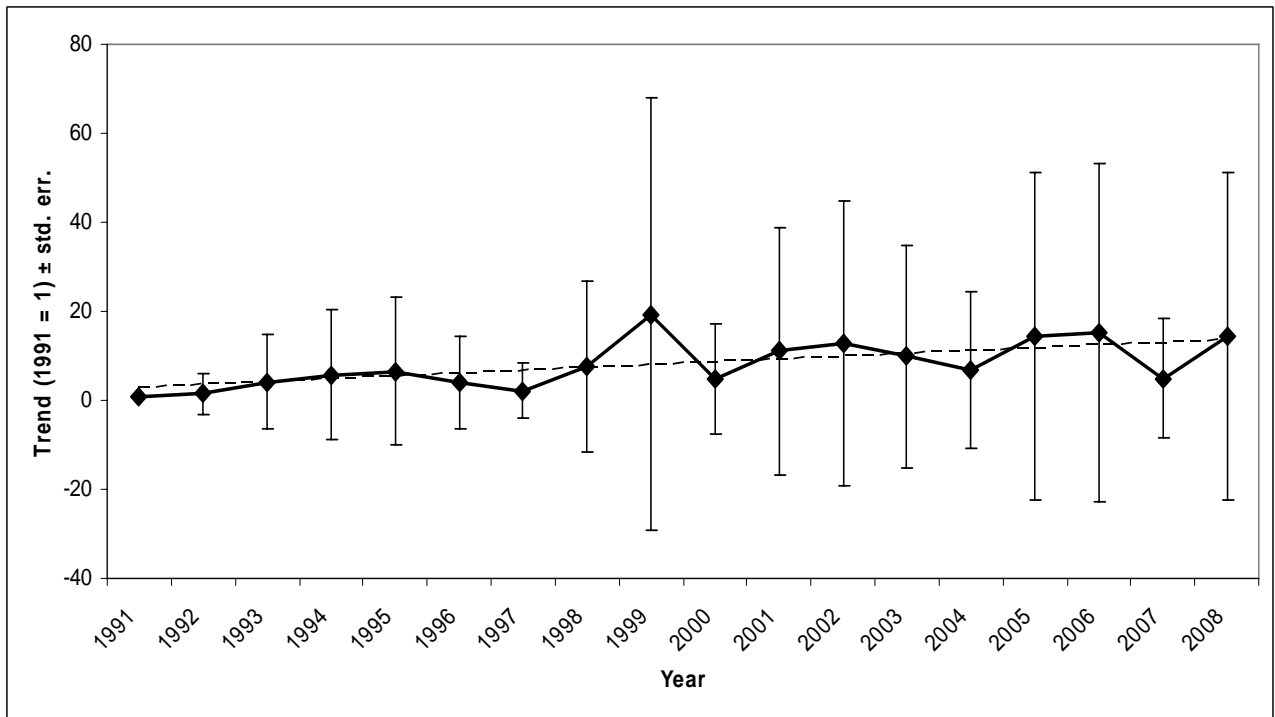


Figure 4 : Trend of Water Thick-knee population in Namibia from 1991 to 2008.

### 9.5 Blacksmith Lapwing (*Vanellus armatus*)

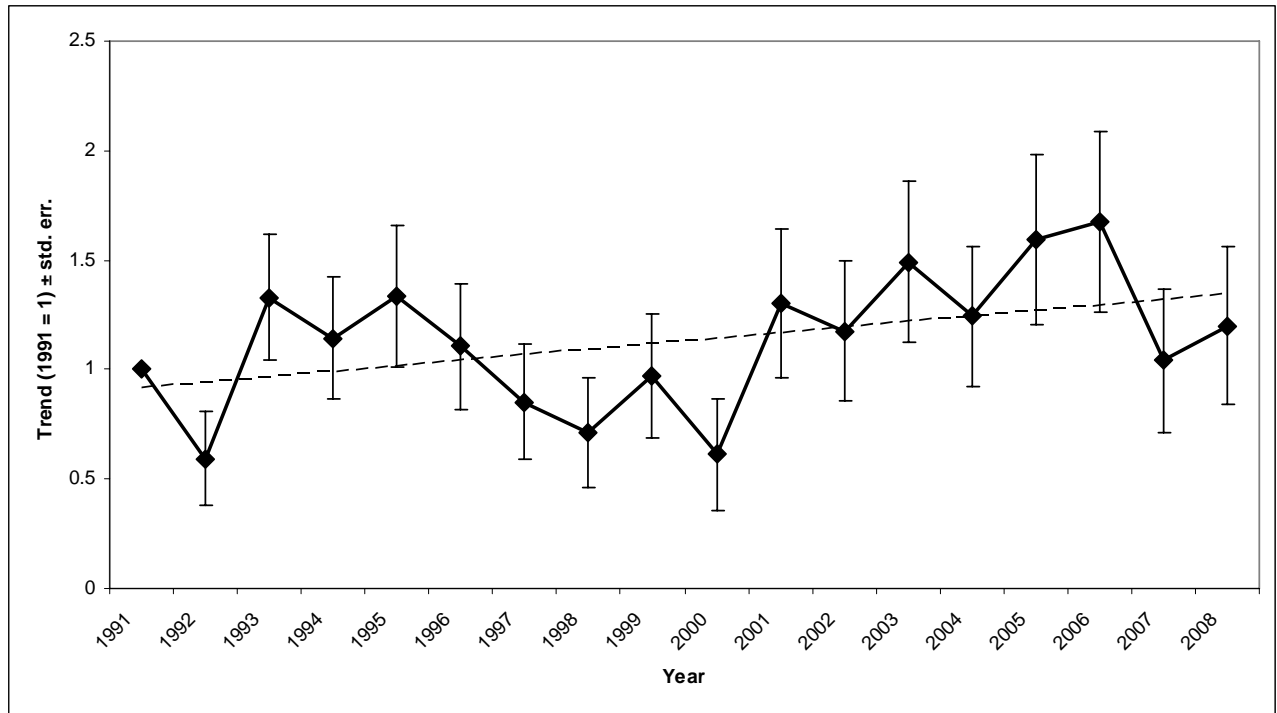


Figure 5 : Trend of Blacksmith Lapwing population in Namibia from 1991 to 2008.

### 9.6 Crowned Lapwing (*Vanellus coronatus*)

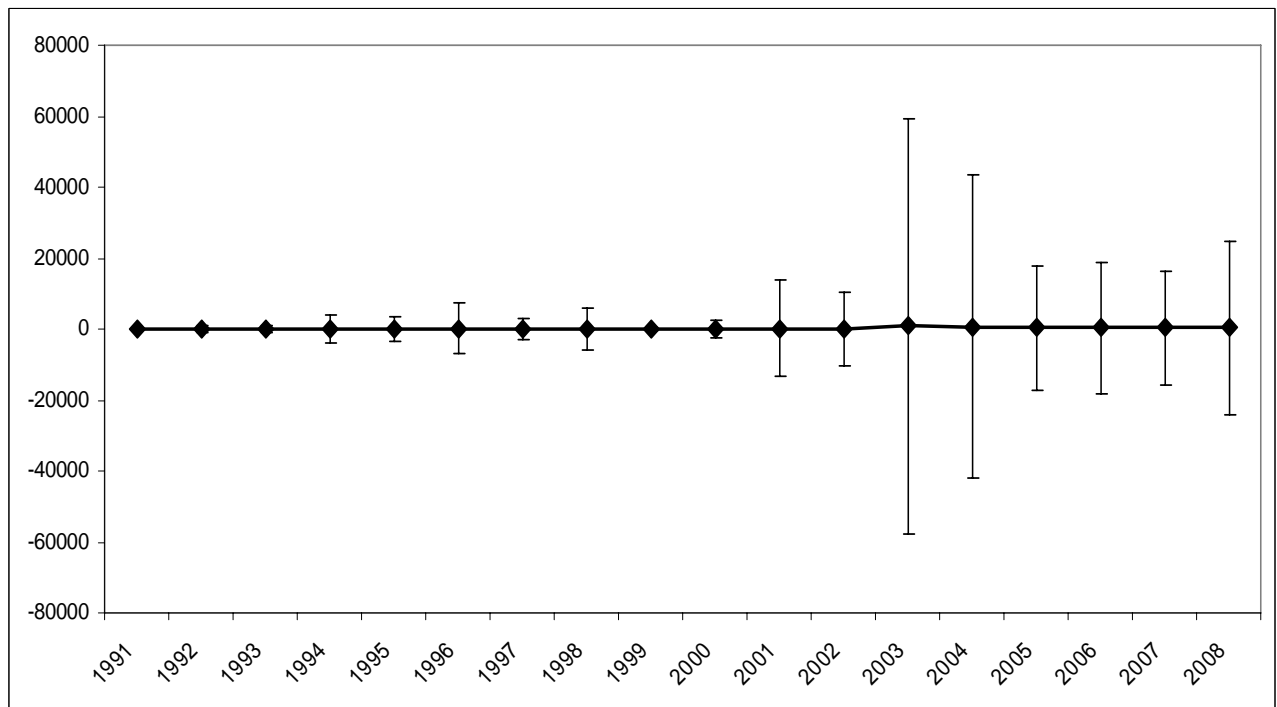


Figure 6 : Trend of Crowned Lapwing population in Namibia from 1991 to 2008.

### 9.7 African Wattled Lapwing (*Vanellus senegallus*)

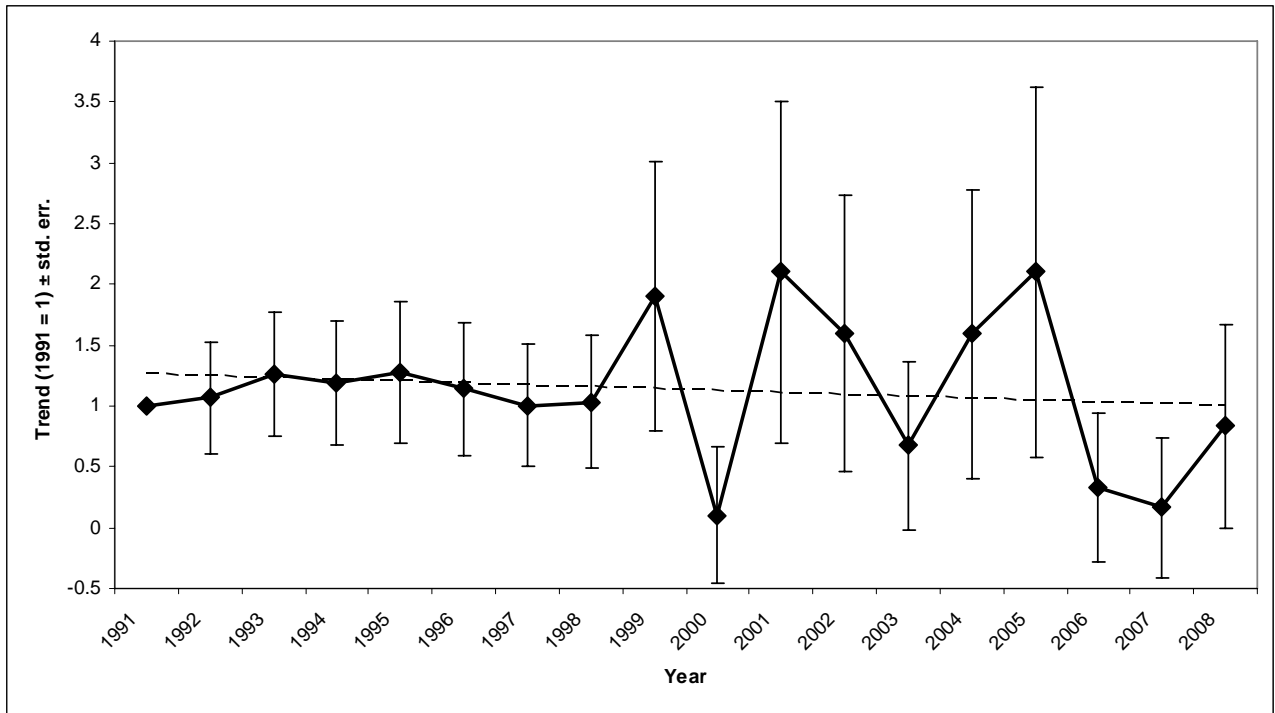


Figure 7 : Trend of African Wattled Lapwing population in Namibia from 1991 to 2008.

### 9.8 Grey Plover (*Pluvialis squatarola*)

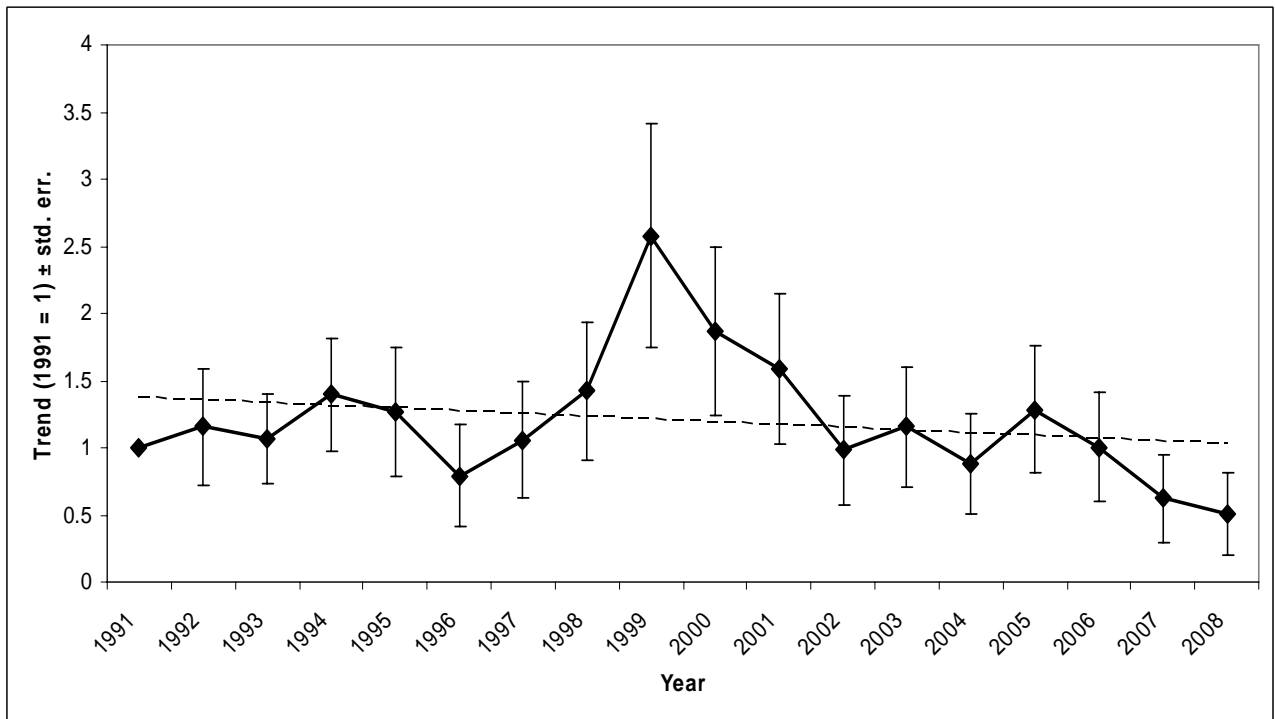


Figure 8 : Trend of Grey Plover population in Namibia from 1991 to 2008.