

# LANIOTURDUS

SWA/NAMIBIA VOGELKLUB  
eine Zweigstelle der  
SWA Wissenschaftlichen Gesellschaft  
und der  
Southern African  
Ornithological Society

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## Bemerkungen an Mitarbeiter

Manuskripte sollten mir Schreibmaschine (oder in gut  
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Skizzen, Karten und Tabellen sollten auf weißem  
Qualitätspapier mit schwarzer Tinte gezeichnet werden.  
Klare Schwarz-weiss-Photographien (15 x 20 cm) können  
eingereicht werden, um die Arbeit zu illustrieren.

Newsletter of the SWA/Namibia Bird Club  
Mitteilungen des SWA/Namibia Vogelklubs  
Vol./Jg. 23, No. 3 & 4, 1987

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## NAMIBIA UNUSUAL BIRD SIGHTINGS REPORT FOR 1986/1987

### THE NAMIBIA UNUSUAL BIRD SIGHTINGS COMMITTEE

This is the third report of the SWA/Namibia Rare Bird Committee, now called the Namibia Unusual Bird Sightings Committee. This report covers the records for 1987 and earlier. The previous report appeared early in 1987 (Lanioturdus 22 (4) : 66-72.)

Following lengthy negotiations with the SAOS Rarities Committee, regarding which birds should or should not appear on our unusual bird list, it has been agreed (P.A. Hockey pers. comm.) that the Peregrine Falcon *Falco peregrinus* will no longer be considered a 'rare' or 'unusual' bird in the geographic area of SWA/Namibia. This is therefore the last time that Peregrine Falcons will be reported here. European Oystercatcher *Haematopus ostralegus* and Redshank *Tringa totanus*, despite the frequency of their occurrence in the central Namib coastal area, remain 'unusual' birds in a sub-regional context, and the S.A.O.S. Rarities Committee will continue to screen all records of these species.

Please note that the Namibia Unusual Bird Sightings Committee attempts to assess and ratify **ALL** unusual birds recorded in this country. When a member of this committee is unfamiliar with a particular species, and hence cannot adequately assess that record, then that member is not entitled to vote towards the ratification of that record. When **TWO OR MORE** members of this committee are unfamiliar with a particular species, then this record is automatically sent to the SAOS Rarities Committee. If they in turn are unfamiliar with the bird, then the record is sent to an overseas expert. In the case where a member of the committee submits an unusual bird record for ratification, that member is not entitled to vote on his own record.

In the case of a bird which is familiar to all the members of this committee (and the record is therefore accepted or rejected by this committee), but the bird remains a rare species in a **subregional context** (e.g., Blacktailed Godwit *Limosa limosa*), then a **COPY** of the record is sent to the SAOS Rarities Committee for their attention. We will, however, publish the record in Lanioturdus, subject to ratification by the SAOS Rarities Committee.

During the period covered by this report, 68 records were assessed, consisting of 47 unusual bird records and 21 range extension records. 49 records were sent to the SAOS Rarities Committee (see below) in 1987, and we await their deliberations. 19 records were accepted and one record was recirculated, pending confirmation.

The Namibia Unusual Bird Sightings Committee members are: C.J. Brown, J. Komen (Chairman), D. Ludwig and A.J. Williams.

Mr C.J. Brown has been co-opted as a member of the SAOS Rarities Committee, and will henceforth be assessing many of our unusual records twice! Congratulations.

**SYSTEMATIC LIST OF UNUSUAL BIRD RECORDS THAT WERE ACCEPTED:**

(\* = subject to ratification by the SAOS Rarities Committee)

**Bathawk** Macheiramphus alcinus

One immature bird photographed at Omaruru, 23 March 1986 (J.C. Sinclair & A. du Toit).

\* **Peregrine Falcon** Falco peregrinus

One bird seen twice on one day at Gobabeb Research Station, 12 November 1986 (D. Allan). Two birds (possibly a pair) seen regularly in 1986, and almost daily in January 1987, at Windhoek State Hospital (C. Mannheimer & J. Mannheimer).

\* **Blacktailed Godwit** Limosa limosa

One bird captured, photographed, ringed and released at Nama Pan, Bushmanland (1920 Dc) on 27 January 1986 (J. Komen). A single bird, at Avis Dam, near Windhoek, first seen on 15 December 1986. This bird remained at Avis Dam for at least three weeks, and was seen and reported by numerous observers. First reported by C. Mannheimer & J. Mannheimer. Photographed. Two birds were seen several times on 28 December 1986 at Rundu Sewage Works, Kavango (E. Komen & J. Komen).

**Yellow Wagtail** Motacilla flava

A single bird photographed at Chudob Waterhole, Etosha, 15 April 1986 (W. Borello & R. Borello). Single immature (1st Winter) bird at Avis Dam, near Windhoek, 17 December 1986 (J. Komen).

**SYSTEMATIC LIST OF RANGE EXTENSION RECORDS THAT WERE ACCEPTED:**

**Gymnogene** Polyboroides typus

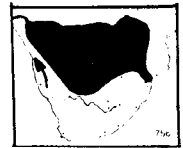
A single bird on four consecutive days at Hardap Dam, near Mariental, 27 April to 1 May 1986 (J.S. Watt). A single adult bird at Farm Claratal



(2216 Dd), near Windhoek, 23 January 1987 (A.R. Macdonald & S.D. Gildenhuys).

**Whitecrowned Shrike** Eurocephalus anguitimens

Two birds in Acacia woodland, Farm Neu Schwaben 73 (2215 Bb), near Karibib, 15 September 1986 (D. Ward). Two birds again seen in same square, 22 October 1986 (D. Ward).



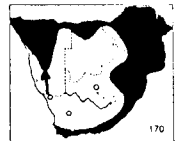
**Pinkbacked Pelican** Pelecanus rufescens

A single bird observed at the sewage works west of Windhoek, 1 January 1987 (A.J. Williams, J. Mannheimer, C. Mannheimer).



**Osprey** Pendion haliaetus

A single bird at Goreangab Dam, near Windhoek, 1 January 1987 (A.J. Williams, J. Mannheimer, C. Mannheimer).



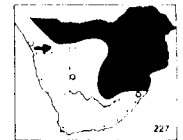
**Woollynecked Stork** Ciconia episcopus

21 birds counted on a small pan alongside D 1502 road, about 10 km from Windhoek-Gobabis road (2217 Bc), 14 December 1986 (L. Mannheimer, C. Mannheimer).



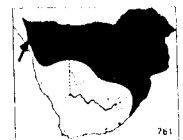
**Lesser Moorhen** Gallinula angulata

Single adult bird at Gross Barmen Resort, near Okahandja, 20 July 1985 (T.G. Wood).



**Plumcoloured Starling** Cinnyricinclus leucogaster

Adult male and female birds were seen on Farms Emeritus and Doornkat (2215 Dc and 2215 Bb respectively), near Karibib, 1 and 3 January 1987 (P. Coulson).



**Marsh Owl** Asio capensis

Single bird photographed on bank of Orange River, Oranjemund, 15 December 1985 (E. Komen & P. Ortlepp).



**Maccoa Duck** *Oxyura maccoa*

A pair of adult birds seen at Kwetche Camp, Mahango Reserve, Kavango (1821 Ba), on three consecutive days, 20-22 February 1986 (E. Komen & J. Komen).

**Black Sunbird** *Nectarinia amethystina*

Single adult male bird on Farm Okonjima (2016 Dc), near Otjiwarongo, on 1 March 1987 (R. Hanssen & M. Leakey).

**RECORDS NOT ACCEPTED**

**Dark Chanting Goshawk**, near Namutoni, Etosha, 17 July 1985. **Black Sparrowhawk**, near Klein Namutoni waterhole, Etosha, 15 December 1986.

**RECORDS SUBMITTED TO SAOS RARITIES COMMITTEE,  
AND NOT YET RATIFIED BY THEM:**

Sharpbilled Honeyguide	Hen Harrier
Black Coucal	Greyheaded Albatross
Tree Pipit	Lesser Blackbacked Gull
Cuckoo Falcon	Rednecked Phalarope
Raquet-tailed Roller	Western Banded Snake Eagle
Sharptailed Glossy Starling	Bittern
Red Kite	Cuckoofinch
Honey Buzzard	Thrush Nightingale
Whitebacked Night Heron	Thrush Nightingale
Olivetree Warbler	American Black Skimmer
Baillon's Crake	Great Snipe
Tree Pipit	Great Snipe
Wilson's Phalarope	Longlegged Buzzard
Mongolian Plover	Eastern Redfooted Kestrel
Mongolian Plover	Pennantwinged Nightjar
Stierling's Barred Warbler	Spectacled Weaver
Leach's Storm Petrel	Spectacled Weaver
Longtailed Skua	European Reed Warbler
Mongolian Plover	Grey Phalarope
Egyptian Vulture	Terek Sandpiper
Collared Flycatcher	Bathawk
	African Hobby
	Greater Swamp Warbler

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**THE BIRDS AROUND RÖSSING URANIUM MINE, CENTRAL  
NAMIB DESERT: A PRELIMINARY LIST**

B.D. COLAHAN

\* State Museum, P.O. Box 1203, Windhoek, S.W.A., 9000.

Apart from the work of Prozesky (1963), Willoughby & Cade (1967), Willoughby (1971) and Molyneux (1976), which vary greatly in their coverage, the avifauna of the Namib Desert has received little attention, and Willoughby's (*op. cit.*) statement that "the avifauna of the Namib Desert is relatively poorly known" still applies today. I thus take the liberty of presenting some very incomplete data collected in the course of other fieldwork done in 1984/85 in the vicinity of Rössing Uranium Mine, near the village Arandis, about 60 km SE of Swakopmund, and lying in the Central Namib Desert. The data are presented in the form of an annotated checklist, with little additional information, and must be regarded as preliminary.

**STUDY AREA AND METHODS**

Rössing Uranium Mine (22°29'S 15°03'E) is about 55 km from the coast and 2 km NW of the Khan River, a large tributary of the Swakop River, and lies on the Inner Namib Platform (Willoughby & Cade 1967) (Fig. 1). At this distance from the sea the climate is less influenced by the cold Benguela Current than places lying in the Coastal (or Outer) Namib, where fog-water precipitation forms a far greater proportion of the total annual precipitation than does rainfall. Fog does, however, penetrate as far as the Mine and condenses there (fog-water precipitation data are not available for Rössing Uranium Mine, but at Gobabeb (23°34'S 15°03'E), which is about the same distance from the coast, the mean annual fog-water precipitation (n=15y) is 30,79 mm (Lancaster et al. 1984). Long-term rainfall records are also lacking for the Mine, but the mean annual rainfall (n =18y) for Gobabeb is 27,20 mm (Lancaster et al. 1984). Rainfall recorded at Point John (within the Mine boundary) for 1984 and 1985 is shown in Fig. 2).

Three of the seven "avian habitats" given by Willoughby & Cade (1967) and Willoughby (1971) for their Central Namib study area occur around the Mine: "Inner Gravel Flats" - "barren or sparsely vegetated gravel plains of the Inner Namib Platform"; "Open Bush" - "scattered bushes 60 cm to 3 m tall"; and "Rocks" - "large boulders, crevices and ledges with or without vegetation" (Willoughby *loc. cit.*). There are also a few scattered trees, mainly Camel Thorn *Acacia erioloba*, but never enough to make up their "Open Acacia Woodland". (The other three habitats they identified were: "Outer Gravel Flats",