

# LANIOTURDUS

Newsletter of the SWA/Namibia Bird Club

Mitteilungen des SWA/Namibia Vogelklubs

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## INHALTSANGABE

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eine Zweigstelle der  
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und der  
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Ornithological Society

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Manuskripte sollten mit Schreibmaschine (oder in gut leserlicher Handschrift) geschrieben sein und zwar mit doppeltem Zeilenabstand auf A4 (30 x 21 cm) Format. Skizzen, Karten und Tabellen sollten auf weissem Qualitaetspapier mit schwarzer Tinte gezeichnet werden. Klare Schwarz-weiss-Photographien (15 x 20 cm) koennen eingereicht werden, um die Arbeit zu illustrieren.

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By Dik Browne



# PARK Notes / Berichte

## NOTES FROM AN ETOSHA DIARY

22/08/86. KALKHEUWEL WATERHOLE. 12h00.

We watched a pair of Rednecked Falcons Falco chicquera "playing around" - dive bombing and persistently scattering the large numbers of Redbilled Queleas Quelea quelea which were to drink - without catching anything. They seemed to be displaying, "showing off" to each other by diving out from their perch from time to time, to attack the queleas. At 12h09 they mated on a bare branch of a tree about 100 metres from the waterhole. This activity at midday was most unusual! Eventually one of the falcons did take a quelea as it was about to drink - this happened right in front of the parked vehicles.

13/09/86. SALVADORA WATERHOLE. 11h15.

We watched an interesting, nay, fascinating performance by some Spotted Dikkops Burhinus capensis! Two of the birds frantically rushed around, calling loudly and fanning their tails to show the buff-coloured feathers below, while the third bird, probably an intruder, looked on. This event took place in the reeds near the waterhole, and it was the first time we have seen such behaviour. Were these birds defending a territory?

13/11/86. KALKHEUWEL WATERHOLE. 11h00.

A Yellowbilled Kite Milvus migrans casually appeared at the waterhole, and a Blacksmith Plover Vanellus armatus gave an unconvincing warning of the kite's presence - seemingly ignored by the birds present at the waterhole. Just as casually, bobbing on its buoyant flight, the kite swooped down from about five metres to a mixed group of doves and elegantly reached out for one. With the third 'bob' it had a dove well-caught in its talons, and was up and away, disappearing beyond the treeline. By 11h30 the same bird (presumably) returned, and after circling the waterhole a few times, came down to drink.

JAN & SUZI VAN DE REEP, P.O. Namutoni, via Tsumeb, Namibia.

## Notes and News

## Bemerkungen & Mitteilungen

### WHITETAILED SHRIKE NESTING IN THE NAUKLUFT PARK

[Received January 1987]

On 8 November 1986, during a weekend visit to the Naukluft Park with the Mountain Club, a nest of the Whitetailed Shrike Lanioturdus torquatus was discovered in a dry tree in a narrow gorge cut by a stream.

Observations of breeding activities were carried out from a position at the same level as the nest, but some distance away on the edge of the gorge, to avoid unnecessary disturbance to the nesting birds.

The nest, in the form of a grass cup, was situated on a forked branch about three metres above the ground. The nest appeared to be fairly old, judging by the weathered appearance of the outer layers of grass. A certain amount of repair work had been done to the nest, judging by the fresher appearance of the nest rim. It is therefore possible that the pair of breeding shrikes were re-using a previously built nest, or that of some other unknown species. It was not possible to see how many eggs were in the nest, nor to determine the exact nature of the inner nest-lining material.

The nest was exposed to direct sunlight, since the tree was dry and devoid of foliage. In spite of this, the incubating bird did not show any obvious signs of discomfort during the period of observation (14h45 to 16h00).

At regular intervals of about ten to fifteen minutes the non-incubating partner landed on a nearby tree with food (large green caterpillars on two occasions), uttering a trilling "tchirrr" call. The incubating bird would then immediately leave the nest and join its mate, where it was offered the food. Both birds then flew and hopped about the adjacent trees for a few minutes, whereafter one of the birds returned to the nest to resume incubation. The incubating bird never approached the nest directly; it hopped about in the tree for a short while, keeping a sharp lookout, before settling in the nest. Once in the nest, it was difficult to see, unless the precise location of the nest was known.

It was not possible to determine whether it was the same bird which returned to the nest each time after a feeding spell, but the feeding behaviour suggests that this was probably the case.

HARTWIG DEDEKIND, P.O. Box 5011, Windhoek 9000.

### EINE BEOBACHTUNG

Eine Zwergtaucherhenne (oder -hahn) Tachybaptus ruficollis baute fuer seine Nachzucht eine kleine Insel. Die Zwergtaucherhenne (oder-hahn) holte mit dem Schnabel eine Art von Moos mit Schlick vermischt aus dem Wasser. Diese schlammige Masse wurde vorsichtig um einen Grashalm gelegt. Der Arbeitsvorgang wiederholte sich so lange, bis sich eine kleine Plattform gebildet hatte. Die Zwergtaucherhenne lockte ihre Kuecken auf diese Insel, um sie zu fuettern. Fuer die Kuecken ergab sich damit eine Moeglichkeit, auf der Insel zu ruhen.

A. BENSELER, Postfach 189, Windhoek 9000.

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Dieter Ludwig