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Editorial

Tim Osborne

Here we are starting the New Year with the first issue of the bird club journal out early. I would like to thank everyone who has contributed to make the *Lanioturdus* a success. I would like to specially thank Ellen Gudde for all the work she has done proofing the printer's drafts. Willie Peter and staff from Typoprint have been very understanding in trying to print the journal remotely from Outjo District.

There is a variety of articles in this issue, so there should be something for everyone. The editor would like to see a few more articles in German. None have appeared since Micki Ludwig published in Volume 35-1.

The country has finally had some rain over most parts so birding should be good for the remainder of the season. I have a nest of Carp's Black Tit in one of my nest boxes and the Chestnut Weavers are in breeding plumage. It looks as if the birds also like the rain.

of the Livingstone-Sesheki road had been constructed in the 17 days of our trip and we were able to make it in 2 hours but then the inevitable loomed. The ferry had broken down and we were stuck. Fortunately, with a lot of help from all the other drivers, after 3 hours we managed to get it going and crossed the border 10 minutes before it closed. Anyone planning a trip there in the future will be pleased to know the new bridge and border post will be open by April 2004.

In the 18 days in Zambia we saw 329 species and I picked up 38 new birds. Driving is not for the timid. Fuel prices range from US\$0.50-1.00/liter. The following is the distance between our stops. Katima Mulima to Choma 354 km, Choma to Greystone 699 km, Greystone to Hillwood 607 km, Greystone to Mutinondo Wilderness 552 km, Mutinondo to Choma 968 km. In total from Windhoek up to Hillwood and back including running around we totaled 8111 km.

OBSERVATION OF TWO OPEN-BILLED STORK *ANASTOMUS LAMELLIGERUS* ALONG THE NAMIBIAN COAST.

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The 2nd August 2003 at 7am, we arrived at the "Guano Platform" in Walvis Bay to observe the take-off of thousands of Cormorants (Cape, Crowned and Bank) that had been roosting on the platform for the night. As we scanned the beach for shorebirds we came across two dark shorebirds sleeping in the middle of a group of White-breasted and Cape Cormorants.

Their identity was soon revealed when one of them lifted its head and after a while started walking. There was no room for doubt...yet plenty for surprise!! At this distance the birds looked very similar in size to White-breasted Cormorants, their body was uniformly dark brown, they had a long neck, dark legs, and a massive long dark bill. We didn't see any opening in the bill, but this

may have been due to the safe distance we kept (400m) or maybe because they may have been young dispersing birds.

Searching the literature (Sinclair *et al.* 2002, del Hoya *et al.* 1992), it seems that the bird is rare south of its breeding range and is more likely to hang around its preferred habitat, fresh water. But in McLachlan & Liversidge (1978), I read about "a single record from Swakopmund".

I hope this record is of any use to the local bird-watching community. For any further information needed on the sighting please contact me. I would like to thank Christian Boix for editing and submitting this record.

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