


LANIOTURDUS

S.W.A. SCIENTIFIC SOCIETY - S.W.A. WETENSKAPLIKE VERENIGING

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ELEFENWÜRGER
LANGSTERT-LAKSIMAN
LONG-TAILED SHRIKE

Die Federzeichnung eines Urolestes melanoleucus von Jochen Voegts wurde entnommen dem Buch von W. Hoesch: Die Vogelwelt Südwesafrikas

MITTEILUNGEN
der ORNITHOLOGISCHEN ARBEITSGRUPPE
No. 1/2 Jg. 1. Apr./Mai 1965

Ueber die Aufzucht zweier Cabanisweber.
(*Ploceus intermedius cabanisii*)
Eva Maria Arnold, Farm Heliodor.

Seit einigen Jahren schon halten sich Maskenweber (*Ploceus velatus*) in der Nahe unseres Hauses auf und nisten vereinzelt da. Die Wasserstelle bei den Vogelkaefigen wird gern aufgesucht, und in der kalten Zeit sind die Weber am Hundefutter zu sehen. Am 10.10.1964 wurde der erste vollausgefärbte Maskenweber am Haus beobachtet (während z.B. in Otavi schon Wochen vorher Voegel im Brutkleid gesehen worden waren).

Im Dezember siedelten sich Maskenweber in den Pfefferbaeumen hinter dem Haus an und bauten ihre Nester aus Rietfasern. In heruntergewehten Nestern fanden wir die typischen rot- und grueneiss gesprenkelten Eier. Ende des Monats hingen ploetzlich Nester mit Eingangsroehren in den Baueumen, in wenigen Tagen wurden die Maskenweber durch Cabanisweber verdraengt. Deren Nester waren, wie schon von W. von Maltzahn geschildert, aus Blatt- rispen des Pfefferbaumes gebaut (siehe "Mitteilungen" No. V/1-2, Ornith. Beilage).

Aus grosserer Entfernung sind die beiden Weberarten schwer zu unterscheiden. Die Nester sind leicht auseinanderzuhalten, auch sind die Eier verschieden, die der Cabanisweber sind rein weiss. Hat man den Vogel in der Hand, kann man einen kleinen Unterschied in der Schwarzzeichnung erkennen. Der Maskenweber zeigt auch einen rost- raunen Schimmer am Kopf. Ich selbst erkenne die maennlichen Tiere im Brutkleid am leichtesten an der Augenfarbe. Die Augen von *Ploceus velatus* sind rot, die von *Ploceus intermedius cabanisii* gelb. Waehrend der erstere roetliche Beine hat, sind die des Cabaniswebers blaeuulich. Die weiblichen Tiere sind, wie an den Zeichnungen im Roberts zu erkennen ist, leicht zu unterscheiden.

Wie bei W. von Maltzahn geschildert, so kamen auch zu unserer Nester- kolonie bald Angehoerige der verschiedenen Kuckucksfamilien. Besonders der Diderik- oder Goldkuckuck, R 352, *Chrysococcyx caprius*, interessierte sich sehr fuer die Nester.

Bald hoerte man schon die ersten Jungen piepsen. Aus einem Nest ertoente besonders lautes Geschrei, sodass ich an einen jungen Kuckuck dachte. Am 13.1.65 holten wir das Nest herunter. Es sassan zwei junge Weber darin, etwa eine Woche alt, die ersten Kiele waren zu sehen. Leider konnten wir das Nest nicht wieder in den Baum praktizieren, so musste ich also die Jungen grosspaepeln.

Weber fuettern ihre Jungen fast ausschliesslich mit Insekten. Man konnte beobachten, wie die Altvoegel Raeupchen brachten, wir aber konnten beim besten Willen keine finden.

o versuchte ich es erst einmal mit gekochtem Ei und Weispapp. Die Kleinen sperren ohne weiteres ihre Schnaebel auf, aber ganz richtig schien diese Nahrung doch nicht. Dann versuchten wir es mit ganz kleinen Engerlingen, die gern genommen wurden.

Leider musste ich am 15.1.65 fuer 12 Stunden von der Farm weg. Der Kuechenjunge uebernahm das Fuettern. Bei meiner Rueckkehr befanden sich die Voegel in sehr schlechter Verfassung und wollten auch nicht mehr fressen. Etwas "Auramin" (Antibiotikum) von der Fa. Kessner in

About the Namibia Bird Club

The Namibia Bird Club was founded in 1962 and has been active since then. The club's mission is to contribute to Namibian ornithology by, amongst other things, arranging regular birding outings, conducting bird ringing and atlasing excursions and educating the public about the value of birds. To achieve this, 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. Bird club members also participate in the African Waterbird Census twice a year.

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 present occasional lecture or video evenings at the Namibia Scientific Society premises. Members receive a digital newsletter, *Namibia Bird News*, which includes a programme of forthcoming events and the Bird Club journal, *Lanioturdus*.

The Namibia Bird Club is not affiliated to any global or regional organization and relies entirely on members' subscriptions and donations to fund its activities.

The opinions expressed in this journal are those of the authors and not necessarily those of the Namibia Bird Club or its committee.

Instructions to Authors

Lanioturdus is a journal dedicated to birds and birding. Although the journal's primary focus is on Namibia, articles from other geographical parts of the globe will also be considered for publication. Authors should use common and scientific names of southern African birds as published in *Roberts' VII*. For other regions, English and scientific names following BirdLife International's species list (<http://www.birdlife.org/datazone/species>) should be used. Text should be submitted as a MS Word document. Photos, maps and figures should be sent as separate jpeg images, graphs as MS Excel charts or jpeg images and tables as MS Word or Excel documents. Please indicate in the article text where these should be placed.



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Editorial

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Fifty and counting! Indeed, your journal is into its 50th volume and as you will have noticed, we have decided to celebrate by giving it a new look.

This issue's cover page is the front page of the first ever *Lanioturdus*, then, of course, still known as the *Mitteilungen*. It was roneoed on foolscap paper and posted to members – how things have changed since!

I am hoping to continue to provide our members with a high quality publication throughout this anniversary year and beyond. This, of course, depends on you sending me contributions and I am very grateful to the two stalwarts Eckart and Neil for providing me with enough material to keep going. You do not need to be a Shakespeare, Goethe or Pierneef to contribute. A simple photographic essay, like Tony's in this issue (admittedly with wow! photographs), will do.

There are so many interesting things going on that not many people know about. Like the nest box study mentioned by Jessica in her article. Never mind the scientific part of it (which has been reported in this journal), but so many other interesting things have been observed during that study which should be recorded and published.

How many people have observed Village Indigobirds in their Windhoek gardens? What about Okahandja or Otjiwarongo? Remember, if you talk about it, it is a story, if you write it down, its history!

Your contributions will not only keep this journal going but also contribute to the knowledge base of ornithology in Namibia and southern Africa and ultimately that is what it's all about. Or not?

Keep birding!

Rarities and Interesting Observations

Compiled by Neil Thomson
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A Lizard Buzzard was photographed by Glyn Edwards and Rosemary Clarke in the Hoanib River bed close to the Skeleton Coast Park boundary on 27 October 2016. This seems to be very far to the west for this species.



Figure 1: Lizard Buzzard © Glyn Edwards and Rosemary Clarke

Otto Schmidt found a Red-eyed Dove at Weltevrede Guest Farm north of Sesriem on 07 November 2016 and then found a Yellow-bellied Greenbul at Paradise Camp north east of Grootfontein on 10 November 2016. Both of these are a long way off their recognized ranges.

In early November 2016 Ulrich Hofmann saw a female Collared Flycatcher at Farm Kakuse about 70 km north-west of Tsumeb but was unfortunately not able to get a photograph of the bird. This follows other sightings of this rare species reported in *Lanioturdus* 49(4) – Okaukuejo 30 September 2016, Katima Mulilo 02 October 2016 and Namibgrens 05 November 2016.

Ulrich also reported seeing a Southern Ground-Hornbill at Farm Kakuse on 16 November 2016. This is only the second time he has ever seen this species on the farm.



Figure 2: Southern Ground-Hornbill © Ulrich Hofmann

Thomas Wiedemann reported another sighting of a Red-eyed Dove in his Academia garden on 20 November 2016. This bird has been around for a while and was first reported at the same location in early July 2015 (see *Lanioturdus* 48[3]).

On 22 November 2016 Gabriel Shatumbu saw two Whiskered Terns at Okaukuejo waterhole in the Etosha National Park.

On the same day Anna Muller saw a juvenile Yellow-billed Stork at the Tilda Viljoen Dam at Gobabis.



Figure 3: Yellow-billed Stork © Anna Muller

Ursula Franke-Bryson reported seeing two Pink-backed Pelicans

standing on a gravel road north of Witvlei on 25 November 2016.



Figure 4: Pink-backed Pelicans © Ursula Franke-Bryson

In late November 2016 several Namibia Bird Club members observed a Spotted Eagle-Owl with two large chicks on the cliff at the southern end of Avis Dam. Interestingly we heard a Spotted Eagle Owl calling in Klein Windhoek in the evening of 02 December 2016, the first time I have been aware of the presence of this species there for many years.



Figure 5: Spotted Eagle-Owl chicks © Anita Zimny

John Fincham found a Grey Wagtail near Ngepi Camp on 26 November 2016. There are very few records of this species in Namibia.

The Namibia Bird Club's outing to Monte Christo on 27 November 2016

produced a host of interesting sightings. Woodland Kingfishers were back there for at least the eighth successive summer. Other interesting sightings included a Black Stork, a European Honey-Buzzard and a Pied Kingfisher.



Figure 6: Woodland Kingfisher © Anita Zimny

Two more rather astonishing records were submitted by Otto Schmidt in the form of SABAP2 ORFs (Out of Range Forms) generated by an atlas card he submitted for Goba Lodge near Gobabis. On 30 November 2016 he saw both Black-collared Barbet and White-browed Coucal at this location. There is a precedent for White-browed Coucal in central Namibia as, some years ago, one was seen around Monte Christo for a substantial period.

On 04 December 2016 Gudrun Middendorff and I saw another European Honey-Buzzard flying over Klein Windhoek.

A photograph of a very far off range male Violet-backed Starling seen in Lüderitz on 05 December 2016 was posted on Facebook. This is

apparently the second record of this species in Lüderitz following a sighting in 2009.

Ryan and Sarah Christinger photographed an Osprey at Camp Syncro on the Kunene River on 05 December 2016. On 31 December they saw another Osprey at the same location which was definitely not the same bird as the second one was ringed. While not really a rarity these are still good records.



Figure 7: Osprey © Ryan and Sarah Christinger

On 07 December Anna Muller photographed a Pied Kingfisher at Tilda Viljoen Dam, Gobabis. This is a species which we seem to be seeing more frequently in central Namibia.



Figure 8: Pied Kingfisher © Anna Muller

The highlight of the Namibia Bird Club's morning walk at Avis Dam on 11 December 2016 was the sighting

of a Klaas's Cuckoo. The bird was first located by its distinctive call. This species had only been recorded once in 134 full protocol SABAP2 cards for the pentad prior to this sighting and was a lifer for many.



Figure 9: Klaas's Cuckoo © Michael Houlden

A photograph of a male Chestnut Weaver in breeding plumage seen on a bird feeder in Walvis Bay on 15 December 2016 was posted on Facebook. I am not aware of any other records of this species at the coast.

From early September 2016 Werner von Maltzahn heard an Orange-breasted Bush-Shrike calling at Farm Hüttenhof in the Otavi area but it was not until mid-December that anyone managed to photograph the bird.



Figure 10: Orange-breasted Bush-shrike © Stefan Ringelmann

Gudrun Middendorff photographed a European Honey-Buzzard on 15 December 2016 in Klein Windhoek.

This was followed by several more sightings in the same vicinity over the following few weeks. This species seems to have become considerably more common in recent years – or have birders’ identification skills improved?



Figure 11: European Honey-Buzzard © Gudrun Middendorff

Peter Cunningham reported the continued presence of an Egyptian Goose at the Lüderitz sewage ponds on 19 December 2016 (see *Lanioturdus* 49[4]) and in addition found a Black-tailed Godwit there.

Peter also saw seven Southern Giant Petrels feeding on a seal pup carcass close inshore at Wolf Bay on 22 December 2016.

A partially leucistic Blue Waxbill in Eros was an interesting Christmas Day sighting for Eckart Demasius.



Figure 12: Partially leucistic Blue Waxbill © Eckart Demasius

Franz Klein reported seeing a Red Phalarope from the Paaltjies road at Walvis Bay on 26 December 2016 (see also below).

Gudrun Middendorff saw another European Honey-Buzzard in Pioneers Park on 26 December 2016.

Eckart Demasius found a Lesser Black-backed Gull at Gemsbokvlakte waterhole in the Etosha National Park. This bird was present from at least 26 to 28 December 2016. Other interesting records from the Etosha National Park provided by Eckart included a Lesser Moorhen at Homob waterhole on 28 December 2016, a breeding pair of Blue Cranes at Andoni and a Pallid Harrier at Salvadora waterhole both on 29 December 2016.



Figure 13: Lesser Black-backed Gull © Eckart Demasius

The last few days of the year brought a flurry of interesting sightings. Gudrun Middendorff and I found a Dwarf Bittern at the Rehoboth sewage

ponds on 27 December 2016 together with a flock of twenty to thirty White-winged Terns.

On 28 December 2016 Gudrun Middendorff and I together with visiting Zimbabwean birder, Innes Louw, and his daughter, Rianna, found a single African Openbill and a single White-backed Duck at the Gammams Water Care Works. Several White-winged terns were also present at this location.

Quintin and Merryl Butcher reported two African Openbills, a Dwarf Bittern and a European Honey-Buzzard at the Gammams Water Care Works on 02 January 2007.

I photographed another European Honey-Buzzard in Klein Windhoek on 06 January 2017. This was obviously not the same bird seen by Gudrun on 15 December 2016 (see above).



Figure 14: European Honey-Buzzard © Neil Thomson

Gertrud Piek informed Gudrun Middendorff of a raptor in the vicinity of her Olympia home on 07 January 2017 and on investigation Gudrun found yet another European Honey-Buzzard.

The Namibia Bird Club's morning walk at the Gammams Water Care Works on 08 January 2017 turned up a Little Bittern, a Purple Heron and two African Openbills.

In addition Trevor Hardaker's SA Rare Bird News Reports mention the following rarities etc. seen in Namibia since mid-November 2016:-

On 15 November two Dwarf Bitterns were seen at Namutoni waterhole while on the same day eleven Caspian Plovers and a Yellow Wagtail were found at Andoni waterhole in the Etosha National Park.

A Gull-billed Tern was reported at Walvis Bay on 17 November 2016.

The presence of Yellow-throated Leafloves at Caprivi Houseboat Safari Lodge as reported again in the third week of November 2016 and their continued presence was confirmed on 26 December 2016.

A Tree Pipit was seen at Camp Kwando on 19 November 2016 while another European Honey-Buzzard was reported at Brakwater on 20 November 2016.

Another European Honey-Buzzard was seen in Olympia on 23 November 2016.

On the same day a Ruddy Turnstone was found at Katima Mulilo sewage works. (There has been a spate of inland records for this species this season – see *Lanioturdus* 49[4]).

On 26 November 2016 a Common Tern was seen near Nunda River Lodge on the Okavango River.

A Common Whitethroat was reported at Erongo Wilderness Lodge on 08 December 2016.

Also on 08 December 2016 a far off range juvenile White-backed Night-Heron was seen at Aroe waterhole near Fischer's Pan in the Etosha National Park.

A single Red Phalarope was reported amongst a group of about forty Red-necked Phalaropes at the Walvis Bay Salt Works on 15 December 2016. At least fourteen of the Red-necked Phalaropes were still present in the area on 18 December 2016.

In the first week of January 2017 two European Honey-Buzzards were reported over the Waterberg plateau and another at Okonjima.

The report dated 08 January 2017 mentions another sighting of a Red Phalarope at Walvis Bay.