



# LANIOTURDUS

**VOL. 46 (2) 2013**

May 2013

**[www.namibiabirdclub.org](http://www.namibiabirdclub.org)**

## CONTENTS

THOMSON N	Editorial	<b>1</b>
DEMASIUS E	An Early Morning Hunting Episode	<b>3</b>
MIDDENDORFF G	Chairperson's Report	<b>5</b>
THOMSON N	Cattle Egrets in Namibia	<b>6</b>
DEMASIUS E	A Different Kind of Birding: Birds on the Stamps of Namibia : Additions to Namibia's 5 <sup>th</sup> Definitive Series	<b>7</b>
FRIEDERICH G	A Zambian Birding Experience – Part 2	<b>9</b>
SWANEPOEL W	Red-eyed Dove <i>Streptopelia semitorquata</i> in Namibia : New Records and Range Extensions	<b>16</b>
DEMASIUS E	An Interesting Nest Site	<b>18</b>
THOMSON N	Short Notes and Interesting Observations	<b>19</b>
NIDDRIE R	Red-chested Cuckoo in Windhoek	<b>26</b>
KOLBERG H	Trends in Namibian Waterbird Populations 9 : Waders and Shorebirds – Part 2	<b>26</b>

DEMASIUS E	Rufous-cheeked Nightjars at the Coast	<b>31</b>
	ATLAS UPDATE	<b>32</b>
	RARITIES AND INTERESTING OBSERVATIONS	<b>33</b>

## Editorial

The Namibia Bird Club is often accused of being the "Windhoek Bird Club" as most of our activities are centred around Windhoek. With this in mind the chairperson organized a camping long weekend at Farm Eileen to the west of Omaruru. This outing was attended by ten people including two of our Swakopmund members, Mark Boorman and Sandra Dantu. The weekend was used to atlas three pentads and to do a bit of ringing. The morning walks in Omaruru were widely publicized on various radio stations in the hope of attracting some local residents to join us and perhaps to become members of the bird club. This turned out to be wishful thinking as there was absolutely no response from Omaruru residents and nobody at all turned up at the publicized meeting points. No one can now say that we have not tried to involve others from outside of Windhoek.

After many above average rainy seasons it looks as if drought conditions have returned to central Namibia. I have been measuring

Giant Kingfisher  
 Malachite Kingfisher  
 African Fish-Eagle  
 Magpie Shrike  
 White-browed Robin-Chat  
 Green-backed Heron  
 Swamp Boubou  
 Grey Heron  
 Dark-capped Bulbul  
 African Jacana  
 Brubru  
 Luapula Cisticola  
 Tawny-flanked Prinia  
 Ashy Flycatcher  
 Burnt-necked Eremomela  
 Black-crowned Tchagra  
 Zitting Cisticola  
 Grey-headed Bush-Shrike  
 White-browed Coucal  
 Terrestrial Brownbul  
 Yellow-bellied Greenbul  
 Little Grebe  
 Lizard Buzzard  
 Senegal Coucal  
 African Hoopoe  
 Orange-breasted Bush-Shrike  
 Grey-backed Camaroptera  
 Red-billed Oxpecker  
 Long-crested Eagle  
 Yellow-breasted Apalis  
 Burchell's Starling  
 African Broadbill  
 Little Bee-eater  
 Black-faced Waxbill  
 Common Scimitarbill  
 African Green-Pigeon  
 African Goshawk  
 Green Wood-Hoopoe  
 Pied Crow  
 Red-billed Buffalo-Weaver  
 African Spoonbill  
 African Harrier-Hawk  
 Collared Palm-Thrush  
 Meyer's Parrot  
 Cattle Egret

Swallow-tailed Bee-eater  
 African Grey Hornbill

(106 species)

**Red-eyed Dove *Streptopelia*  
*semitorquata* in Namibia: New Records  
 and Range Extension**

Wessel Swanepoel  
 PO Box 21168  
 Windhoek

email: wessel@kaokosafari.com

The Red-eyed Dove occurs in southern Africa in the north-east, east and south, avoiding the arid areas of Namibia, the Kalahari Basin and western Karoo. In Namibia it is found only in the extreme north, from east to west, and again in the extreme south along the Orange River. Its habitat requirements are well-developed woodlands, riverine forests and alien plantations and thickets (Dean 2005) including urban and rural gardens and city parks (Maclean 1993). Two records of Red-eyed Dove from the arid areas of Namibia were mentioned in *Lanioturdus* (Swanepoel 2005). The first record was from Mariental on the Fish River in 2001 and the second from the Löwen River near the Naute Dam in 2003. At the time it was not clear whether the records represented resident populations or vagrants. Since 2005 more Red-eyed Doves have been recorded outside of their known range on several occasions:

**Lüderitz:**

- One bird seen calling from the tower of the railway station building (W. Swanepoel in July 2007)
- One bird heard from the centre of town (W. Swanepoel in June 2011)
- Five birds all over the centre of Lüderitz (June 2012, S. Rust pers. comm.)
- Up to a dozen birds on a residential roof. Population seems to be resident

and a pair engaged in nest building in a tree (July 2012, J. Kemper pers. comm.)

**Mariental** (along Fish River to Hardap Dam):

- Three birds seen and heard in the riverine acacias below the dam wall; two birds engaged in courtship activities (W. Swanepoel in February 2008)
- One bird seen and heard opposite town in riverine trees (W. Swanepoel in February 2008)
- One bird heard in riverine trees opposite town (W. Swanepoel in November 2009)
- One bird heard in riverine acacias below dam wall (W. Swanepoel in January 2011)
- One bird heard in riverine acacias below dam wall (W. Swanepoel in October 2011)

**Windhoek:**

- One bird seen calling from an exotic tree in a garden in Pioneer Park (W. Swanepoel in April 2008)

The Red-eyed Dove is inclined to considerable range extensions and has colonized vast areas of the arid Karoo, indicating dispersal over unsuitable habitat to towns and villages (Colahan 1997). In Namibia it has colonized the Lower Orange River and environs down to Oranjemund, including Ai-Ais and Rosh Pinah, since 1993 (Maclean 1993). Its ability to disperse over unsuitable habitat explains the Windhoek record and also its presence in Lüderitz. The bird seen in Windhoek was wary and took off immediately when approached indicative of a wild bird. The birds in the Mariental area and at Naute Dam probably utilized suitable riparian habitat provided by the Fish River to disperse northwards. All these records can probably be attributed to birds originating from the lower Orange River.

In the Mariental area, Red-eyed Doves were recorded in five out of six visits to the Fish

River (all in the period October – February) and in Lüderitz it seems to be resident (pers. comm. J. Kemper). Red-eyed Doves in certain parts of southern Africa are subject to seasonal movements (Colahan 1997) which is probably not the case with the Mariental population. The fact that it has not been recorded in the period March to August can be attributed to a lack of visits by the author to the locality during these months. Both the Windhoek and Naute Dam records seem to be of vagrant birds as it was not recorded again at these localities despite the author residing in Windhoek and visiting the Naute Dam on three subsequent occasions. However, the presence of this species is usually revealed by its distinctive call and when not vocal is easily missed.

In the light of the above and although no breeding records exist, the Mariental–Hardap and Lüderitz records clearly represent range extensions for the Red-eyed Dove. However, more work is needed to confirm whether Red-eyed Dove is resident in the Mariental–Hardap area or whether it is only a seasonal visitor.

Given its ability to colonize new areas, this species will most probably also establish new populations in other towns and cities in Namibia, such as Windhoek, Walvis Bay and Swakopmund.

**References**

- Dean, W.R.J. 2005. In: Roberts Birds of Southern Africa 7<sup>th</sup> edition. Hockey, P.A.R., Dean W.R.J., Ryan, P.G. (eds.), pp 286-287. Trustees of the John Voelcker Bird Book Fund, Cape Town.
- Colahan, B.D. 1997. Red-eyed Dove *Streptopelia semitorquata*. In: The Atlas of Southern African Birds. Vol 1.: Non-passerines. Harrison, J.A., Allan, D.G., Underhill, L.G., Herremans, M., Tree, A.J., Parker, V., Brown, C.J. (eds.) p 506–507.

Kemper, Dr. Jessica ornithologist personal communication ([jkemper01@gmail.com](mailto:jkemper01@gmail.com))

Maclean, G.L. 1993. Roberts' Birds of Southern Africa. 6<sup>th</sup> ed. p 302–304. John Voelcker Bird Book Fund, Cape Town.

Rust, Stefan personal communication ([birdscontour@iway.na](mailto:birdscontour@iway.na))

Swanepoel, W. 2005. Birds on the move: range extensions and vagrants in western, central and southern Namibia 1994–2005. *Lanioturdus* 38(2): 20.



Red-eyed Dove in Lüderitz © Jessica Kemper

## An Interesting Nest Site

**Eckart Demasius**  
[e-b.de@iway.na](mailto:e-b.de@iway.na)

All photographs in this article are © Eckart Demasius

I was on inspection duties when Rock Kestrels flying overhead attracted my attention. They seemed to be heading in the direction of one of our sportsfields, so we had the same destination as that was the subject of my inspection.

On arrival I noticed one kestrel sitting on a fence pole but it flew off as I approached.

The condition of one of the floodlights was of concern to me – it was clearly broken.



But something else caught my attention – some bird droppings on the structure!! The binoculars revealed the secret. The kestrels were using the broken floodlight as a breeding site and two chicks were in the nest.



Hoping to have better light conditions in the afternoon I inspected the sportsfield again. Only the chicks were found in the nest.



However at a neighbouring sportsfield one of the adult Rock Kestrels was keeping a close watch on proceedings while the second one was presumably out hunting.



Initially I was a bit upset about this lack of maintenance but I gave instructions to delay the repairs until after the Christmas break – without anyone knowing the real reason of course.

### **Short Notes and Interesting Observations**

Neil Thomson  
([batqs@mweb.com.na](mailto:batqs@mweb.com.na))

#### **Chestnut Weavers**

It is well known that Chestnut Weavers choose their breeding sites in a highly erratic manner and that they will start building a colony only to abandon partially built nests and move on.

On 25/03/2012 while crossing farmland on our way back to the B1 after a Bird Club outing to Farm Krumneck south west of Windhoek we came across several small colonies of partially built nests. What was of interest was the activity of the birds around one of these colonies. There were a number of Chestnut Weavers, all females or perhaps non breeding birds, flitting about the nests and entering some of the partially built nests. There were no breeding plumaged males present at all. Some of the members present said that they had seen one or two of the birds carrying what appeared to be nesting material but there was no sign of any actual nest building. My first thought was that this colony had been abandoned by the males and that the females were in fact dismantling the nests but why the females should have remained

behind when the males abandoned the partially built nests I have no idea. The other possibility is that these were “practice nests” built by first year male birds not yet ready to breed.

While on the subject of Chestnut Weavers – on 01/04/2012 Gudrun and I caught and ringed about 60 at Farm Teufelsbach between Windhoek and Okahandja. These birds were all females feeding chicks in the nests. By this stage the males had deserted the breeding colonies. On 28/04/2012 Dieter Oschadleus caught a female and a juvenile bird at Farm Teufelsbach. Then on 17/05/2012 we caught 141 juvenile Chestnut Weavers at Farm Otjihavera Portion No 3 a few kilometers south of where we had ringed the females on Farm Teufelsbach and two weeks later we caught a further 75 at Farm Teufelsbach – again almost all of them juveniles. It would appear that, as the vast majority of the birds caught were juveniles, most females had left the area for their winter range. I have not been able to find any mention in the literature available to me of females departing before the young birds.

On 01/07/2012 we again went ringing at Farm Otjihavera Portion No 3 and this time caught and ringed 114 juvenile Chestnut Weavers. In addition we recaptured three of the birds we had ringed six weeks earlier on 17/05/2012. Also of interest was that many of these birds had commenced their primary moult with up to three feathers replaced or in the process of being replaced. I do not know at what age weavers start moulting their primaries but given that there were chicks in the nests in the general area on 01/04/2012 these birds must have been about three and a half months old when we captured them. (Dieter Oschadleus has advised that some weavers undergo a post fledging moult). As these juvenile birds were still present in central Namibia at the beginning of July it would seem that they were overwintering in the area. (Numbers of these birds were still present at the same location on 05/08/2012 and on 02/09/2012 we caught and ringed a further 85). While it is believed that the Chestnut Weavers which breed in central Namibia move to northern Namibia and