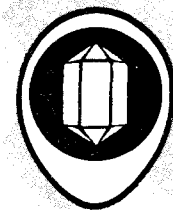


*Lanioturdus torquatus*



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===== FISH PREY REMAINS FOUND IN SWIFT TERN AND  
HARTLAUB'S GULL REGURGITATIONS. =====

Claudia Walter, Rondebosch.

In February 1982, members of the FitzPatrick Institute, led by Dr. D. C. Duffy, visited islands off the coast of South West Africa, to conduct research on seabirds, mainly penguins and cormorants. During a visit to Possession Island, undigested prey regurgitates at a roost site of Hartlaub's Gulls (Larus hartlaubii) and Swift Terns (Sterna bergii) were collected.

Most regurgitated pellets consisted mainly of fish. Remains of crustaceans and molluscs were found in a few pellets, but were not readily identifiable. Fish species were identified from otoliths present in the pellets, Otoliths are bony deposits which lie in the inner ear of teleost (bony) fishes and are characteristic for each fish species.

Pelagic Goby (Sufflogobius bibarbatus) was taken by both birds. Swift Terns also preyed upon hake (Merluccius spp.) and gulls on lantern fish (Lampanyctodes (probably hectoris)). It is not sure whether the hake were taken live or as offal from fishing boats since it is normally a deep-water species.

During the same period at Possession Island, Jackass Penguins (Spheniscus demersus) were feeding on Horse Mackerel (Trachurus trachurus) and Cape Anchovy (Engraulis capensis), whereas Cape Cormorants (Phalacrocorax capensis) were taking goby, lantern fish and anchovy. The deeper foraging-penguins and cormorants took fish species that are believed to occur closer to the surface (anchovy and horse mackerel), whereas terns and gulls, which forage at the sea surface (to a depth of approximately 1m) took deepwater mesopelagic fish species (goby, hake and lantern fish).

This apparent contradiction might be the result of a difference in temporal foraging pattern, rather than a difference in foraging method. The gulls and terns may have fed in the early hours of the morning or late in the evening, when mesopelagic species are closer to the surface and therefore more readily available to surface feeders. The pelagic anchovy and horse mackerel may remain at too great a depth to be captured by the terns and gulls, but are shallow enough to be exploited by the diurnal penguins and cormorants.

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Sie verschwanden für längere Zeit im Nestraum, vergrösserten die Seitenlöcher erheblich, benahmen sich sehr lärmhaft, brachten aber kein Nestbaumaterial herein.

Kurz vor Weihnachten kamen die Cucullata wieder. Sie überraschten die Sperlinge. Es gab einen kurzen Wirbel, die Sperlinge verzogen sich. Der Einflugstutzen wurde wieder repariert. Im Januar gab es die zweite Brut. Im März zogen die Schwalben ab.

Nun übernahmen die Sperlinge die Nester. Wieder wurden die Seitenlöcher hergestellt. Die lauten Gesellen waren ständig mal im, mal am Nest. Ob sie dort brüteten konnte ich nicht feststellen. Seit 4 Jahren wird nun dieses Nest so gebraucht, bzw. behandelt. Das Nest selbst zeigt keinerlei Verschleisserscheinungen. Der Einflugstutzen wird mindestens zweimal im Jahr repariert. Wenn die Cucullata da sind, gibt es immer Kotflecke unter dem Nest. Bei den Sperlingen habe ich nie welche gesehen. Sie scheinen das Nest als warmen Aufenthaltsort zu gebrauchen.

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R E V I E W

ROBERTS' BIRDS OF SOUTHERN AFRICA by Gordon Lindsay Maclean. 1985 - Published by The Trust of the John Voelcher Bird Book Fund; Cape Town. 848 pages; 74 colour plates; numerous line drawings; colour distribution map per species;

In 1940 the first edition of Austin Roberts' now famous book The Birds of South Africa was published. It was an almost instantaneous success and in the subsequent years, three further editions were published, these being revised by Dr.G.L.MacLachlan and Dr.R.Liversidge. At the time of the first revision, the name of the book was changed to Roberts' Birds of South Africa in honour of the original author.

The fifth edition of "Roberts" has just appeared in the bookshops. The new author, Professor Gordon Maclean, took two years off from his normal University work of teaching and research to completely rewrite the text on all the 891 species covered in the book. This edition claims to be up to date to the end of April 1984, but in fact, for many species, information is included that has as yet not been published in scientific journals. This is because all the species accounts were sent to other ornithologists (usually the specialist in that particular group of birds) to be checked, and these referees often added in the results of their own unpublished work.

Special features of this new Roberts include (i) new colour illustrations, with all the colour plates being placed together at the front of the book for easy reference, (ii) several keys to help with identification, (iii) new enlarged distribution maps showing whether a bird is resident (green),

breeding migrant (blue) or nonbreeding migrant (yellow), (iv) sonograms of most vocalizations to aid interpretation of bird calls, fully explained in the Introduction, (v) revised and corrected birds names in English, Afrikaans and eight African languages.

I have had opportunity to use the new Roberts on a recent trip from Windhoek via Caprivi to Francistown in Botswana, referring to a wide range of bird species from the common and alien House Sparrow to the rare Honey Buzzard and Western Snake Eagle. I found the text to be clearly set out, being divided into sections entitled Measurements, Bare Parts, Identification, Voice, Distribution, Status, Habitat, Habits, Food and Breeding. At the end of many of the species accounts is a reference or two to the most important publications. Particularly good is the identification section, giving descriptions of simple, everyday language that all readers would easily understand. Attention is drawn to similar species which could possibly cause confusion, and the distinguishing features are given. A feature of the book that I particularly like is the attention drawn to those aspects of the biology of each species for which inadequate information exists. For example, a species as common and familiar to us all in Windhoek as the Cape Bunting has no data available on its Incubation and Nestling stages, these being listed as "Unrecorded". This will surely make people look more closely at those species occurring in close proximity to their homes or on their farms and start filling in the gaps in our knowledge.

All in all this is a tremendously informative and well produced book and will undoubtedly be the standard reference on southern African birds for many years to come. It is an essential companion for ornithologists, bird watchers and anyone who enjoys the outdoors.

Christopher J. Brown

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TIP GEGEN ZECKEN  
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Nagellackentferner mit einem Wattestäbchen gründlich auf eine Zecke getupft, veranlasst sie zum sofortigen Loslassen, so dass sie leicht aus der Haut gezogen werden kann. Dieses simple Rezept gibt der Internist Dr. Sherman aus Connecticut, nachdem er es an befallenen Familienmitgliedern ausprobiert hatte. Andere Methoden wie Bestreichen der Zecke mit Öl oder Salbe oder Betupfen mit einer brennenden Zigarette wirken meist nicht sofort, so dass man versucht ist, an dem Parasiten zu ziehen. Manchmal reisst dabei der Leib ab, während die Mundwerkzeuge in der Haut steckenbleiben und Entzündungen verursachen können. Auch bei Hund und Katze lassen die Plagegeister nun sofort los. Aus: Die Gefiederte Welt, Jg. 108, 12, 1984 (S.327).