


# LANIOTURDUS

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



ELETERVURGER  
LANGSTERT-LAKKIMAN  
LONG-TAILED SHRIKE

Die Federzeichnung eines Urolestes melanoticus von Jochen Voigt wurde entnommen dem Buch von W. Hoersch: Die Vogelwelt Südwesafrikas

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MITTEILUNGEN

der ORNITHOLOGISCHEN ARBEITSGRUPPE

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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 gruenweiss gesprenkelten Eier. Ende des Monats hingen ploetzlich Nester mit Eingangsroehren in den Baeumen, 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 groesserer 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 blaeu- lich. 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 sassen 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 Maispapp. 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

Holger Kolberg  
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Fifty and counting! Indeed, your journal is into its 50<sup>th</sup> 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!



## Ringers' Get-together 2016

Jessica Sack

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All photographs in this article are © Jessica Sack

Early on a Saturday morning at the end of April 2016, fully packed and ready to go camping, we headed south to farm Nomtsas where the annual Ringers' Get-together was to take place. Twenty four birders and ringers flocked together to spend four days enjoying camping, ringing and bird atlasing. By the time we arrived the early arrivals had already established a good list of birds present on the pentad. Every morning groups of people drove to other parts of the huge farm to atlas - in total eleven pentads where atlased in the area, with a good number of species recorded in spite of it being winter time. However, the Fish River which passes through the farm still had some standing water in it which attracted birds to the area.



Nets and traps were put up to catch birds in the area. Species caught included Familiar Chat, Crimson-breasted Shrike, Southern Masked-Weaver and Little Swift. The swifts were a challenge with their small feet clawing onto one like a cat! At night Dirk caught owls such as Pearl-spotted Owlets and Southern White-faced Scops-Owls. One evening Albert Voigts, the owner of the farm, took some of us out night ringing. It was entertaining to watch Dirk trying to

catch birds with a net in the dark, but in the end a Namaqua Sandgrouse and a Double-banded Courser were caught and ringed. Despite it being very cold we saw an Aardwolf.

During this whole routine of being out ringing and atlasing, no one needed to worry about coming back early to prepare food, as Claire and Holger took it upon themselves to prepare large, delicious meals every evening with most of the leftovers being finished for lunch the next day.



Not only were we engaged with birds most of the time but also helped Albert with some farm work. One afternoon a few of us hopped on the back of the Landcruiser to help with getting two calves in from somewhere on the farm. On the way there we of course recorded and watched birds. When we reached the place where the cattle were kept the two calves first had to be caught, so a nice chase started involving several people running around trying to catch the calves. When these were loaded we drove a detour back as Albert wanted to show us where he always sees Sclater's Larks. All of a sudden he accelerated and drove through the veld like a mad person with us

hanging on at the back. The jackal he was chasing turned out to be a springbok and he apologised profusely for diving like a maniac! Unfortunately at the area where Sclater's Larks are normally seen none were found to the disappointment of everyone! We also drove to one part of the farm where bats are found and so had a close look at them. The bats stay in an old pump house during the day and then head out at night to hunt.



After four days of hanging together, atlasing and ringing a variety of birds and listening to a talk by Dirk about nest boxes and the findings thereof, everyone started to pack up and after a long goodbye, headed off on their own ways to do something else for the rest of the week. A group of us, ten to be exact, decided to go on and enjoy each other's company for another four days. We headed towards Maltahöhe and Hudup Camp Site which farmer Christian Otto had kindly made available to the bird club free of charge. The camp lies on the Hudup River and this still had a good amount of water in it. Over the two days we spent there we assembled a list of 82 bird species. In those two days we also explored other parts of the farm and the area to atlas more pentads. Gudrun put out some bird traps and caught and ringed a Karoo Scrub-Robin. In the evenings we also had scorpion hunts in the course of which we found some nice specimens in the rocks.



After two days we continued our journey to Farm Gras. Gras Game Lodge had invited us to come and try out their new campsite which they were in the process of developing, so we all headed that way to spend another two nights there. We were immediately struck by the amount of water that was standing in pools in the riverbed of the Fish River. We arrived at the actual lodge which was an old German colonial building in good condition and, after having a chat with the managers, headed down to the campsite and immediately started with a bird list for the pentad which, after two days, totalled 91 species.





In the afternoon we headed out and covered other pentads in the area. This was repeated the next morning when we divided ourselves into two groups and drove to opposite ends of the farm. That morning, after looking for the Sclater's Lark for six days, both groups finally found it. Franz and Mark were very happy and celebrated immediately with a beer! The other group which included Gudrun and Neil, also found a Sclater's Lark and were very amazed by the behaviour they saw. But by looking closely at what it was doing, they saw that the bird was feeding a chick, so perfectly camouflaged on the ground, that seconds after they walked away they were not able to locate it again. In the afternoon we were invited up to the lodge for coffee and cake and enjoyed the view down onto the Fish River. After that we got

a tour around the old building, an explanation of how it is now used as a lodge and a review of its history. One evening Gudrun caught a Pearl-spotted Owlet in her mist net and I had the opportunity to ring it and all went well. Mark had a bat in his net and I was able to show everyone how to hold and measure these creatures. After two nights there our holiday came to an end and we packed and slowly made our way back to Windhoek or Swakopmund, remembering the lovely experience of camping out and enjoying each other's company and knowledge for the eight days we were together.

As a student and trainee ringer I would like to thank the Namibia Bird Club whose sponsorship made my attendance at this Ringers' Get-together possible.

