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## Editorial

Tim Osborne

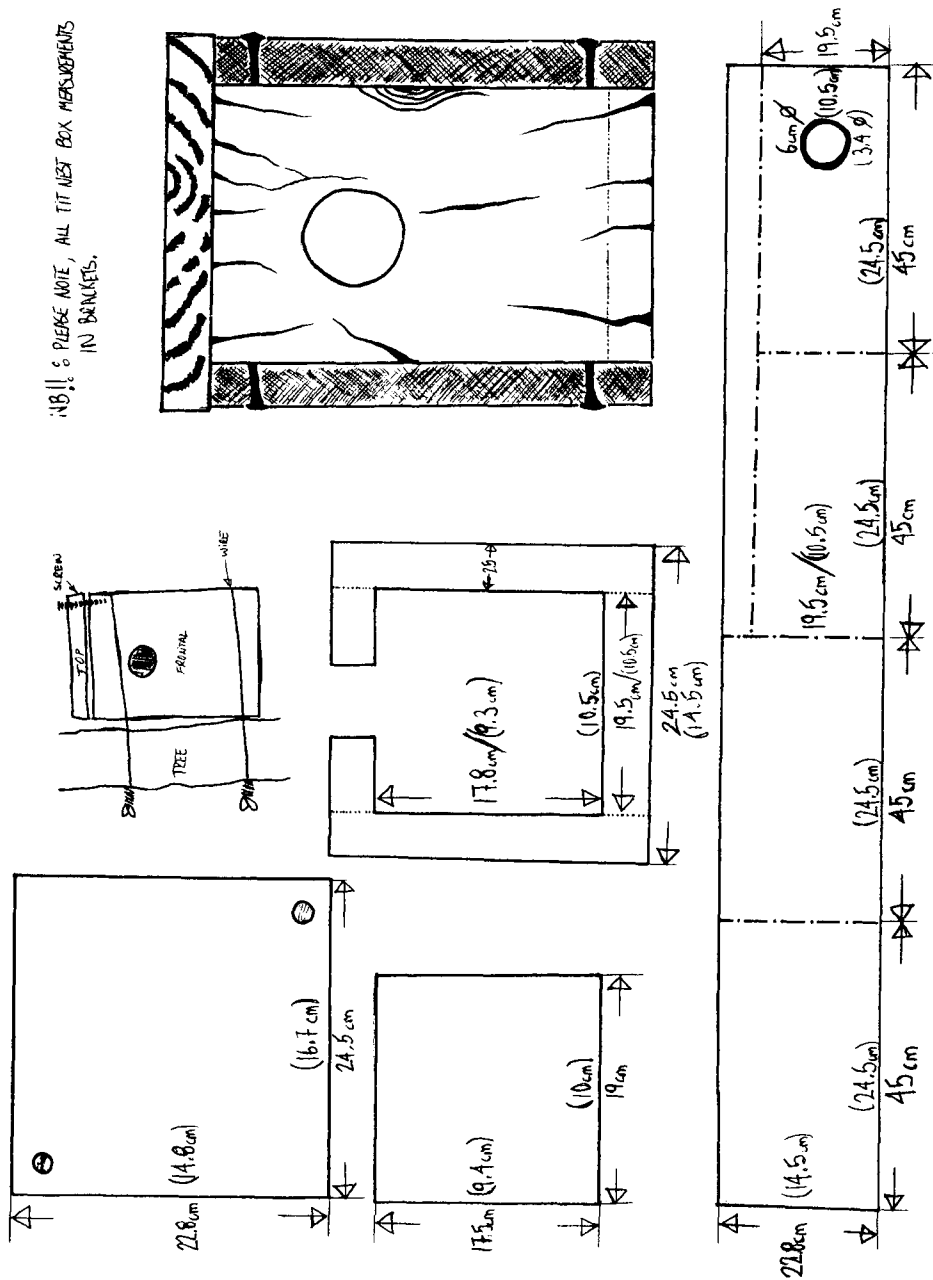
I must apologize to the members for the delay in Vol. 37 (1). It was at the printers in late January but due to unforeseen circumstances it was delayed until April. It also had a distortion error and a double entry of the map accompanying Holger Kolberg's ringing report, which was my fault. Not having a printer, I only work on my laptop and sometimes I cannot see what the final page will look like.

The rains are past and those birds dependent on insects have bred. The seed-eaters are enjoying the harvest and the large raptors are prospecting their nests as they also have lots of prey in the form of young birds. The Monotonous Larks are still singing their hearts out day and night on our farm. The African Scops Owls are also calling throughout the night. From our place we can hear 5 pairs, one of which is right outside our window. Funny how one gets used to natural sounds in the bush. When we come to Windhoek we cannot sleep with the car alarms, dogs barking and traffic, but here with a Scops calling all night we sleep right through.

From the Chairman's Report you will be able to see that the club membership is declining. If you want to keep the club viable you must also do your part and try and get new members to join.

There are a lot more sightings reported in this issue, which is a welcome change. Keep sending those in. So far this year we have added three new species to the Namibian list: Gull-billed Tern, Streaky-breasted Flufftail and European Blackcap (more on this species in the next volume).

!NB!! PLEASE NOTE, ALL FIT NEST BOX MEASUREMENTS IN BRACKETS.



## Sociable Weavers nesting on a cliff-face

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Sociable Weavers *Philetairus socius* usually build their nests in trees, favouring *Acacia erioloba*, *Boscia albitrunca* and *Aloe dichotoma*. When trees are not available, they use telephone poles, windmills and electricity pylons.

In 2002 on NamibRand Nature Reserve (2515Bb), I discovered a new colony with 12 nests on a calcrete conglomerate overhang. There are some *Commiphora glaucescens* on the hillside opposite the nest. According to Maclean (1993) and Tarboton (2001), the weavers “rarely” nest on cliff faces. Mendelsohn and Anderson (1997), state that “locally nests are constructed on cliff faces, e.g. at the Asbestos Mountains southwest of Griekwa-stad” in South Africa.

To my knowledge, this is the first documented case of Sociable Weavers nesting on a rock overhang or cliff in Namibia.

### References

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### Undercover larks

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During 2003 I had the chance to observe heat avoidance behaviour in Spike-heeled Larks *Chersomanes albofasciata* which I had not seen, heard of, or read about previously, of any other Southern African lark. The behaviour was observed on three different occasions (February, September, November) whilst birding in Etosha National Park during 2003. The first two sightings (Feb & Sept) were recorded on the plains heading towards Leeubron (north of Okaukuejo), the