



LANIOTURDUS

Vol. 46 (4) 2013

October 2013

www.namibiabirdclub.org

CONTENTS

THOMSON N	Editorial	1
Van der MERWE D	Whisky, Alpha, Hotel, Lima MAYDAY! A Doubly Fatal Birdstrike	3
DEMASIUS E	A New Owl in the Swakop River	4
THOMSON N	What else can we expect to find in Namibia?	6
CUNNINGHAM P	Notes on the Presence and Nest Building of Chestnut Weavers in Windhoek	8
BARTLEWSKI S & THOMSON N	Disabled Swifts	10
KOLBERG H	Trends in Namibian Waterbird Populations 10 : Gulls and Terns	12
THOMSON N	African Harrier-Hawks in Windhoek	18
SWANEPOEL W	Layard's Tit-Babbler – North Western Range Extension in Namibia	21
THOMSON N	Short Notes and Interesting Observations	22

KOLBERG H	Summary of the 2013 Summer Wetland Bird Counts in Namibia	27
	ATLAS UPDATE	28
	RARITIES AND INTERESTING OBSERVATIONS	29

Editorial

A report was posted on SA Birdnet in July 2013 by a renowned birder claiming to have seen two species in north western Namibia new to Namibia (there was a hint of a third) and indeed new to the southern African subregion. This person also claimed to have visited the site where Angola Cave Chat is known to occur and to have made an overnight foray into Angola to see Swierstra's Spurfowl.

These last claims set alarm bells ringing as some who had seen the Angola Cave Chat were adamant that the vehicle purportedly used could not possibly have accessed the terrain and also that it is not possible to reach the area where Swierstra's Spurfowl occurs in Angola on a single overnight trip unless there is another population of these birds a lot further to the south. This makes the

Erongo Mountains of a Rockrunner purportedly drinking. Julia Schweitzer, who did a study on Rockrunners in Windhoek (see *Lanioturdus* 44 (5)) informed me that she had never seen one of these birds drinking. Gudrun and I have again observed “our” bird drinking on two subsequent occasions.

Eckart Demasius observed a Dusky Sunbird drinking water at Goanikontes on 28/08/2013, something he had never witnessed before. According to Roberts VII this species is known to drink occasionally.



Dusky Sunbird drinking © Eckart Demasius

Summary of the 2013 Summer Wetland Bird Counts in Namibia

Holger Kolberg
Ministry of Environment and Tourism
Windhoek

(holgerk@mweb.com.na)

(Detailed table added to the end of the publication)

The summer of 2013 in Namibia was mostly hot and dry and this was expected to affect the bird counts in several ways. A total of 38 sites were counted and delivered 465 987 birds of 122 species. The highest number of birds was counted at Sandwich Harbour (255 633 birds) where flamingos and terns made up about 80% of the number counted. Two places share the

highest number of species recorded (43 species): Shamvura on the Okavango River and the Walvis Bay Ramsar site. The lowest total was recorded at Van Rhyn Dam near Keetmanshoop where no birds were seen because the dam had totally dried up. Thanks to the efforts of Mark Paxton we are now receiving counts from several places along the Okavango River, covering about 70 km of that river. The Namibia Bird Club continues to monitor the wetlands around Windhoek whilst many volunteers under the leadership of Peter Bridgeford participate in the count at Walvis Bay.

This is the first time in many summer counts that large numbers of flamingos have been counted at the coast, probably as a result of the dry conditions inland, although healthy numbers still remain at Etosha. Blue Cranes seem to have disappeared from the Etosha area with only one individual being counted at Fischer’s Pan and none at Lake Oponono. A point of concern is the low number of birds of prey, especially African Fish-Eagles, seen. They are conspicuous in their absence at several of the inland wetlands where these raptors were regularly counted.

The usual crop of rarities was reported: A Red-chested Flufftail from the Kayova area on the Okavango, Terek Sandpiper at Grosse Bucht, Lüderitz, American Golden Plover at Walvis Bay and Eurasian Oystercatcher at Walvis Bay and Sandwich Harbour. The Red-necked Phalaropes and partially leucistic Common Redshank at Walvis Bay and the Mile 4 Saltworks respectively count as stock birds these days.

My thanks are due to the many volunteers that spend their time and money to contribute to these counts. Your efforts are very much appreciated!