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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 organise 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 the bird club's journal, *Lanioturdus* and outings and events are advertised on the club's website www.namibiabirdclub.org.

The Namibia Bird Club is not affiliated to any global or regional organisation 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.



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Editorial

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Winter is usually a time of dormancy and hibernation but this issue of *Lanioturdus* certainly has somewhat of a breeding flavour to it.

How many of us have birds breeding in our gardens? The only time we take notice is when the birds destroy our plants in their quest to gather nesting material or when we find a little chick that has dropped out of a nest before fledging.

We probably also notice the nests but how many of us have taken note of when the bird started building the nest, when were the eggs laid, hatching date etc.

Although a good summary of breeding data for the birds of Namibia has been published, it still contains many gaps and even when paging through 'The Bible' i.e. Roberts, it is amazing how little information is available about the breeding habits of some species.

In fact, I remember when Roberts VII was published, there was a list of 'missing information' published on the book's website and a lot of it pertained to breeding. I still have that list somewhere; perhaps it is time to dig it out...

Keep birding!

Summary of the 2017 winter wetland bird counts in Namibia

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Wetland bird counts were conducted in Namibia in July and August 2017 and a total of 113 321 birds of 105 species were counted at 45 sites (Table 1). The highest total was recorded at Walvis Bay, followed by Sandwich Harbour and Gautscha Pan. As usual, the wetlands of the North-East top the diversity charts. Two of the pans near Tsumkwe could not be reached due to extensive flooding and strong winds resulted in low numbers during the counts on the Lüderitz peninsula whilst the extremely low level of the Okavango River most probably affected the counts there. Two new sites were counted: a section of the Kwando River at Namushasha and another pan near Tsumkwe (Nama Pan II).

Flamingos and waders made up the bulk of the total with Greater Flamingos and Chestnut-banded Plovers being the two most numerous species in the two respective categories. Twenty-four red data species were recorded and the two species mentioned above top this list (Table 2). Of concern here is the fact that once again no Great Crested Grebe or Grey Crowned Cranes were recorded. On the positive side, it is good to see that Maccoa Duck are returning to the Walvis Bay sewage works in large numbers. The total of 39 African Fish-Eagles at fourteen sites is also very encouraging. Many thanks to all the volunteers that participate in these counts – your efforts are very much appreciated.

Table 1: Details of sites counted.

SITE	DATE	GREBES	PELICANS	CORMORANTS & DARTER	HERONS & EGRETS	STORKS	IBISES & SPOONBILLS	HAMERKOP & SHOEBILL	FLAMINGOS	CRANES	GEESE & DUCKS	RAILS, GALLINULES & COOTS	FINFOOT & JACANAS	WADERS/SHOREBIRDS	GULLS, TERNS & SKIMMER	BIRDS OF PREY	ADDITIONAL SPECIES	TOTAL	SPECIES
Aeroplane Bay	23-Aug-17	0	0	9	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	23	117	0	0	149	4
Agate Beach	23-Aug-17	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	2	0	0	11	35	0	0	48	4
Avis Dam	08-Jul-17	24	0	3	2	0	1	0	0	0	4	27	0	28	0	0	0	89	12
Baraka Pan	01-Aug-17	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	8	2	1	1	0	0	0	12	5
Cape Cross	13-Jul-17	954	0	109	0	0	0	0	428	0	138	0	0	267	874	0	0	2770	21
Daan Viljoen GP	09-Jul-17	3	0	1	3	0	0	1	0	0	2	11	0	0	0	2	0	23	10
Gautscha Pan	02-Aug-17	42	0	0	59	0	29	0	0	0	1473	5003	0	21	12	1	0	6640	24
Gimsa Pan	02-Aug-17	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	1	2	0	0	0	4	3
Goreangab Dam	09-Jul-17	122	0	14	1	0	0	0	8	0	37	19	0	1	0	0	0	202	15
Griffith Bay	23-Aug-17	0	0	2	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	16	11	0	0	29	8
Groot Dobe	01-Aug-17	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Grosse Bucht	23-Aug-17	0	0	5	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	24	29	0	0	58	7
Guano Bay	23-Aug-17	0	0	8	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	38	36	0	0	83	12
Gura Pan	02-Aug-17	40	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	43	2	0	4	0	1	0	90	7
Hardap Dam	16-Aug-17	0	448	132	32	0	67	0	0	0	119	0	0	50	13	1	0	862	23
Hoffnung Dam	08-Jul-17	0	0	0	1	0	3	0	0	0	64	0	0	19	0	1	1	89	11
Kayova Area, Okavango River	19-Jul-17	0	0	97	101		6	4	0	0	8	11	17	48	2	1	0	295	38
Klein Dobe	01-Aug-17	0	0	0	3	0	0	0	15	0	133	0	0	210	1	0	0	362	11

Leadwood Pan	02-Aug-17	3	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	287	3	0	4	0	0	0	297	6
Lüderitz Sewage Works	23-Aug-17	4	0	0	3	0	0	0	72	0	41	0	0	26	251	0	0	397	12
Mahango Core Area	30-Jul-17	0	0	13	222	22	104	0	0	0	3402	0	21	113	0	12	0	3909	27
Makuri Vlei	01-Aug-17	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	16	4	1	4	0	0	0	26	7
Mavunje (Kwando River)	26-Jul-17	0	0	2	24	2	2	1	0	2	45	10	59	50	3	3	0	203	26
Monte Christo	09-Jul-17	1	1	8	3	3	11	0	0	0	97	3	10	14	0	2	0	153	21
Nama Pan	02-Aug-17	31	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	358	10	0	0	0	0	0	399	5
Nama Pan II	03-Aug-17	47	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	53	65	1	14	0	0	0	180	10
Namushasha (Kwando River)	27-Jul-17	0	0	0	10	0	9	1	0	0	1	2	0	17	0	4	0	44	15
Naute Dam	18-Aug-17	0	50	105	2	1	3	0	0	0	33	0	0	2	0	0	0	196	9
Ndhovu Area, Okavango River	16-Jul-17	0	0	63	99	56	138	9	0	0	33	17	28	71	6	4	0	524	36
Nunda Area, Okavango River	29-Jul-17	0	0	25	39	4	1	1	0	0	28	8	12	25	3	1	0	147	24
Nuu-no Pan	02-Aug-17	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Radford Bay	23-Aug-17	0	0	51	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	11	45	0	1	108	10
Riverdance Area, Okavango River	16-Jul-17	0	0	21	60	0	0	2	0	0	8	9	6	46	0	3	0	155	26
Samsitu Area, Okavango River	02-Jul-17	1	0	94	79	18	2	1	0	0	76	19	17	50	9	4	0	370	33
Sandwich Harbour	15-Jul-17	0	46	10535	73	0	0	0	2950	0	29	0	0	14740	8133	0	1	36507	28
Second Lagoon	23-Aug-17	0	0	23	1	0	0	0	118	0	0	0	0	258	39	0	0	439	13
Shamvura Area, Okavango River	23-Jul-17	0	0	216	58	1	11	2	0	0	160	16	11	53	36	4	0	568	46
Shearwater Bay	23-Aug-17	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	18	20	0	0	38	5
Swakop River Mouth	29-Jul-17	0	1	154	7	0	0	0	2	0	1	5	0	9	2	0	0	181	14
Swakop Sewage Works	28-Jul-17	1	0	0	3	0	0	0	0	0	5	27	0	4	315	0	0	355	10
Tjokwe Pan	01-Aug-17	21	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	67	33	2	3	0	0	0	126	9
van Rhyn Dam	17-Aug-17	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	23	0	0	34	0	0	0	57	8
Walvis Bay	15-Jul-17	2850	704	160	66	0	0	0	33824	0	649	0	0	14923	1236	0	0	54412	36
Walvis Bay Sewage Ponds	16-Jul-17	164	176	0	12	0	2	0	369	0	164	132	0	61	288	0	0	1368	25
Windhoek (Gammams) Sewage Works	09-Jul-17	6	0	60	59	0	13	0	0	0	57	138	2	22	0	0	0	357	26
	Total	4315	1426	11910	1023	107	402	22	37786	2	7665	5576	189	31335	11516	44	3	113321	105

Table 2: Details on red data species counted.

Species	No	Sites
Greater Flamingo	26560	9
Chestnut-banded Plover	12075	4
Cape Cormorant	10844	5
Lesser Flamingo	10026	5
Black-necked Grebe	3928	4
Hartlaub's Gull	2456	13
Great White Pelican	1426	7
African Black Oystercatcher	156	10
Maccoa Duck	79	5
Caspian Tern	63	4
Crowned Cormorant	43	6
African Fish-Eagle	39	14
African Skimmer	39	4
Eurasian Curlew	17	2
Rufous-bellied Heron	9	4
African Marsh-Harrier	4	3
Damara Tern	4	2
Black Stork	2	2
Wattled Crane	2	1
Bank Cormorant	1	1
Cape Gannet	1	1
Great Snipe	1	1
Saddle-billed Stork	1	1
Slaty Egret	1	1

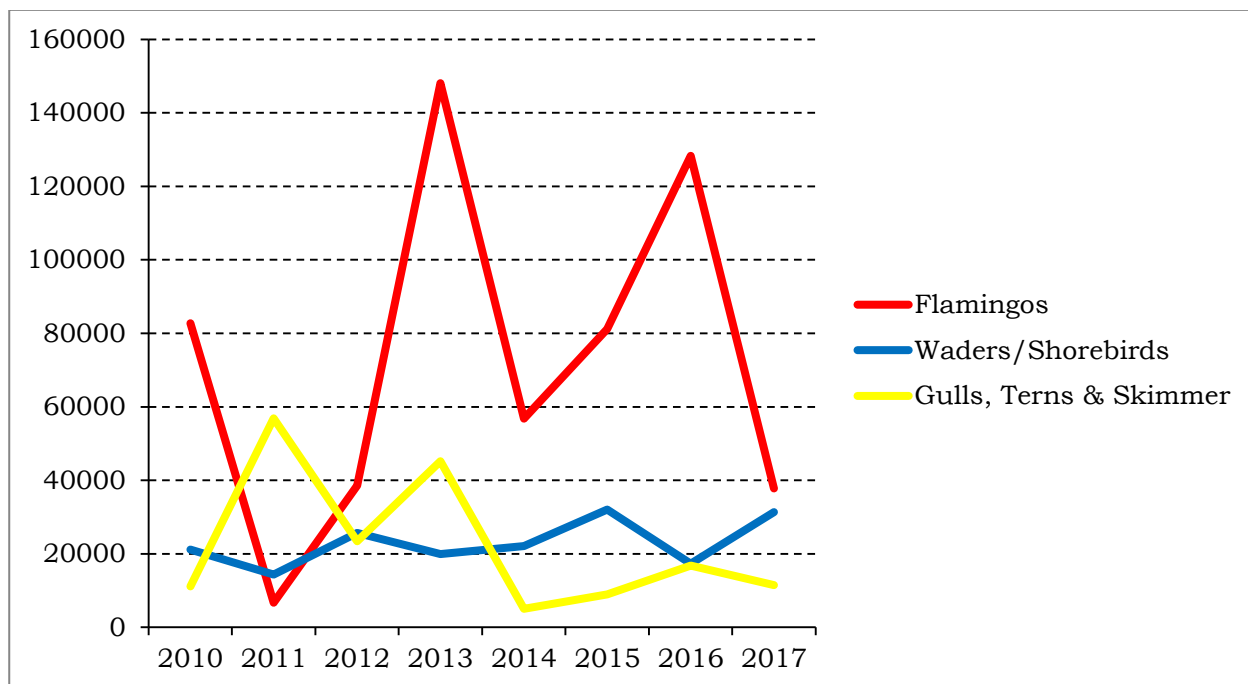


Figure 1: Numbers of the three most numerous groups since 2010.