



CONTENTS

THOMSON N Editorial	1
SWANEPOEL W Angola Cave Chat <i>Xenocorychus ansorgei</i> in the Kaokoveld of Namibia	2
WOOLLEY S Lesser Yellowlegs <i>Tringa flavipes</i> at Rundu Sewage Works – a New Species for Namibia	3
KEMPER J Cat Alert on Halifax Island	4
BROWN C Notes on Arnot’s Chat and Sharp-tailed Starling from Eastern Caprivi, Namibia	6
KOLBERG H Summary of the 2011 Ringing Season in Namibia	7
DEMASIUS E An Interesting Observation on Feeding Behaviour	10
THOMSON N Are you sure that “your” Garden Birds really are “your” Garden Birds?	11
KOLBERG H Trends in Namibian Waterbird Populations : Rails, Gallinules, Coot and Jacana	13
THOMSON N A Weekend at Omandumba	17

MÜLLER E Report on the 2012 Namibian Ringers’ Get-together	19
KOLBERG H Summary of the 2012 Sum- mer Wetland Bird Counts in Namibia	21
THOMSON N Red-billed Queleas	21
ATLAS UPDATE	24
RARITIES AND INTERESTING OBSERVATIONS	25

Editorial

In this issue I am delighted to be able to publish articles on two species new to Namibia, one of which is in fact new to the southern African sub-region and is believed to be resident in the far north west of Namibia.

In May 2012 Wessel Swanepoel discovered a population of Angola Cave Chats on the southern slopes of the Zebra Mountains west of Swartbooisdrif in the far northwest of Namibia. This species was thought to be an Angolan endemic but has now been found south of the border. Please take note of Wessel’s request that he be informed of any further sightings of this species in order to facilitate his research into this species in Namibia.

The second species new to Namibia which we feature in this issue is the Lesser Yellowlegs seen by Simon Woolley at the Rundu Sewage

to my feeding table a short distance from the nest. I have to assume that this was one of the breeding pair as they are quite territorial. This turned out to be a bird I had ringed in August 2010 so I am convinced that neither of the 2009/2010 pair returned to this nest to breed in 2010/2011 and the nest was taken over by another pair.

To me the foregoing all suggests that there is a tremendous movement of birds in our suburban environment and I really cannot believe that the majority of “your” birds are indeed loyal to your garden.

Trends in Namibian Waterbird Populations 8: Rails, Gallinules, Coot and Jacana

Holger Kolberg
Directorate Scientific Services
Ministry of Environment and Tourism
Windhoek

The eighth article in the series on trends in Namibian waterbird populations summarizes count data for six species for the period 1977 to December 2008. For each species the Red Data Book (RDB) status, both global and Namibian, is given, the population trend as per Wetlands International, the number of times the species was counted, the number of times it has passed the 1% population criterion, the maximum count and the sites where it has passed the 1% population criterion.

The local trend is calculated for the period 1991 to 2008 only because continuous data is available for that time. The computer programme TRIM was used for these analyses (see an earlier publication for the selection criteria and methods) (*Lanioturdus* 43 (2) – *Ed*).

For each species the number of sites used in the analysis, the number of observed counts (this includes zero counts), and the sites containing more than 10% of the total number counted are given. A trend and slope are given. A slope value of 1 would indicate a

perfectly stable population, whereas any value above 1 means a positive trend and a value of less than 1 a negative trend. Population trends are graphically presented as indices relative to a base year (in this case 1991) and thus all have a value of 1 for 1991. An index value of 2 indicates a doubling of the population relative to 1991 and an index of 0.5 would mean half of the 1991 figure.

Trends for three of the six species considered here are increasing but none have passed their 1% population, mainly because total population figures are unknown.

(Larger scale replications of the graphs in this article are attached to the end of this edition).

8.1 Black Crake (*Amauornis flavirostris*)¹

IUCN RDB Status: Least concern
Namibia RDB Status: ?
WI Trend: Unknown



Photo : © Neil Thomson

The solitary and secretive nature of this bird makes it difficult to count and numbers are generally low. It is a common bird in north-eastern Namibia and therefore the majority of records are from that area.

No of times counted: 58
No of times past 1% population (= unknown):?

¹ Names follow Hockey, P.A.R., Dean, W.R.J. and Ryan, P.G. (eds) 2005. *Roberts – Birds of Southern Africa, VIIth Edition*. The Trustees of the John Voelcker Bird Book Fund, Cape Town, South Africa.

Maximum count: 21 at Mahango Game Reserve on 24 July 2006
 Past 1% population at: Nowhere

Trend analysis

Number of sites: 5
 Number of observed counts: 57
 Number of missing counts: 33
 Total number of counts: 90

Sites containing more than 10% of the total count:

Site	Number	%
Mahango Game Res.	94	53.7
Shamvura	53	30.3

Overall slope: Moderate increase (p<0.01)
 1.1124 ±0.0346

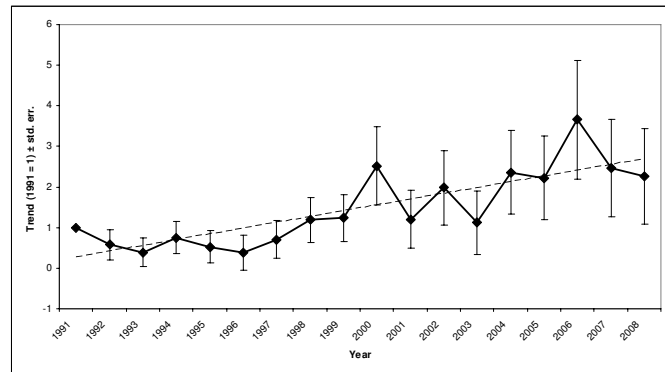


Figure 1: Trend of Black Crake population in Namibia from 1991 to 2008.

8.2 Common Moorhen (*Gallinula chloropus*)

IUCN RDB Status: Least concern
 Namibia RDB Status: ?
 WI Trend: Unknown



Photo : © Eckart Demasius

This is one of the more common waterbirds and is regularly counted at many sites.

No of times counted: 407

No of times past 1% population (=10000): 0
 Maximum count: 284 at Walvis Bay Sewage Works on 23 January 2007
 Past 1% population at: Nowhere

Trend analysis

Number of sites: 10
 Number of observed counts: 124
 Number of missing counts: 56
 Total number of counts: 180

Sites containing more than 10% of the total count:

Site	Number	%
Sandwich Harbour	522	21.6
Swakop Sewage	499	20.6
Walvis Bay Sewage	953	39.4

Overall slope: Strong increase (p<0.05)
 1.1016 ±0.0259

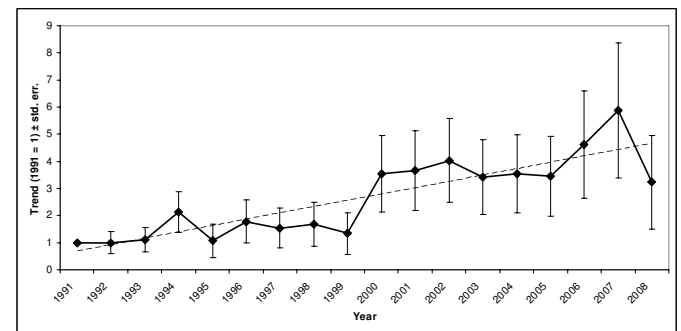


Figure 2: Trend of Common Moorhen population in Namibia from 1991 to 2008.

8.3 Lesser Moorhen (*Gallinula angulata*)

IUCN RDB Status: Least concern
 Namibia RDB Status: ?
 WI Trend: Unknown



Photo : © Eckart Demasius

This bird's distribution is restricted to north-eastern Namibia where it is regularly counted.

No of times counted: 32

No of times past 1% population (= unknown):?

Maximum count: 171 at Tsumkwe Pans on 25 January 1994

Past 1% population at: Nowhere

Trend analysis

Number of sites:	4
Number of observed counts:	56
Number of missing counts:	16
Total number of counts:	72

Sites containing more than 10% of the total count:

Site	Number	%
Fischer's Pan	46	14.5
Tsumkwe Pans	233	73.5

Overall slope: Uncertain

0.9532 ±0.2197

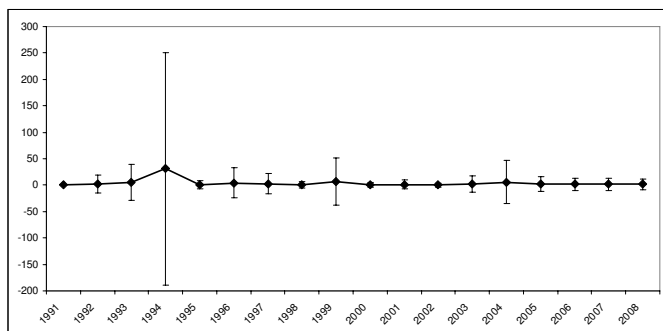


Figure 3: Trend of Lesser Moorhen population in Namibia from 1991 to 2008.

8.4 African Purple Swamphen (*Porphyrio madagascariensis*)

IUCN RDB Status: Least concern

Namibia RDB Status: ?

WI Trend: Stable



Photo : © Eckart Demasius

This bird is common in many wetlands but occurs in low numbers.

No of times counted: 168

No of times past 1% population (= unknown): ?

Maximum count: 22 at Walvis Bay Sewage Works on 3 August 2006

Past 1% population at: Nowhere

Trend analysis

Number of sites:	6
Number of observed counts:	83
Number of missing counts:	25
Total number of counts:	108

Sites containing more than 10% of the total count:

Site	Number	%
Sandwich Harbour	28	14.4
Shamvura	28	14.4
Swakop River Mouth	22	11.3
Walvis Bay Sewage	99	51.0

Overall slope: Uncertain

1.0338 ±0.0302

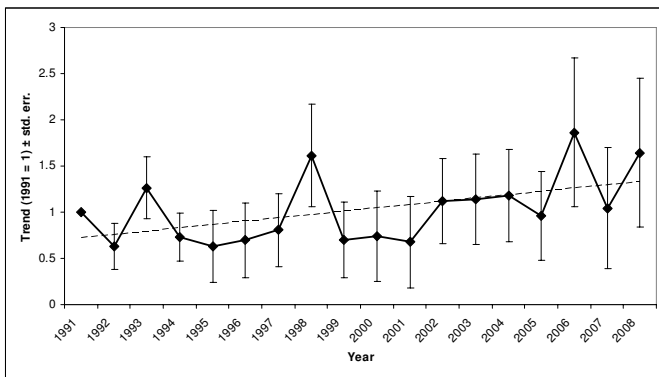


Figure 4: Trend of African Purple Swamphen population in Namibia from 1991 to 2008.

8.5 Red-knobbed Coot (*Fulica cristata*)

IUCN RDB Status: Least concern
 Namibia RDB Status: ?
 WI Trend: Unknown



Photo : © Neil Thomson

This is one of the most common waterbirds and it may occur in large flocks at times. This species has also profited from the proliferation of farm dams and sewage works.

No of times counted: 525
 No of times past 1% population (=10000): 0
 Maximum count: 1200 at Tsumkwe Pans on 15 July 2000
 Past 1% population at: Nowhere

Trend analysis

Number of sites: 13
 Number of observed counts: 170
 Number of missing counts: 64
 Total number of counts: 234

Sites containing more than 10% of the total count:

Site	Number	%
Lake Oponono	1236	11.2
Naute Dam	1180	10.7
Sandwich Harbour	1387	12.6
Swakoppoort Dam	1205	11.0
Tsumkwe Pans	2731	24.8

Overall slope: Uncertain
 1.0313 ± 0.0360

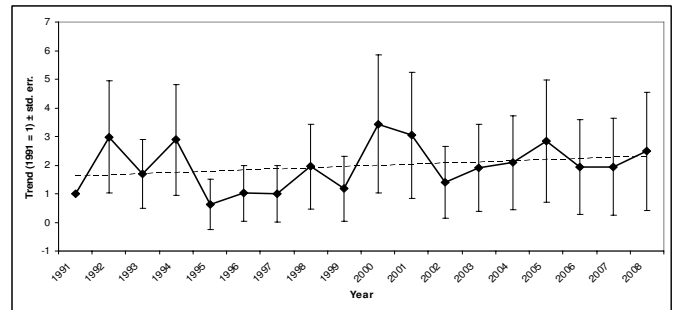


Figure 5: Trend of Red-knobbed Coot population in Namibia from 1991 to 2008.

8.6 African Jacana (*Actophilornis africanus*)

IUCN RDB Status: Least concern
 Namibia RDB Status: ?
 WI Trend: Stable



Photo : © Eckart Demasius

This species is locally common in north-eastern Namibia and this is reflected in the counts.

No of times counted: 72
 No of times past 1% population (= unknown):?
 Maximum count: 120 at Mahango Game
 Reserve on 1 July 2005 and 7 February 2007
 Past 1% population at: Nowhere

A Weekend at Omandumba

Neil Thomson
 (batqs@mweb.com.na)

All photographs in this article are © Neil Thomson

Trend analysis

Number of sites: 4
 Number of observed counts: 48
 Number of missing counts: 24
 Total number of counts: 72

Sites containing more than 10% of the total count:

Site	Number	%
Mahango Game Res.923	79.0	79.0
Shamvura	131	11.2

Overall slope: Strong increase ($p < 0.01$)
 1.1528 ± 0.0326

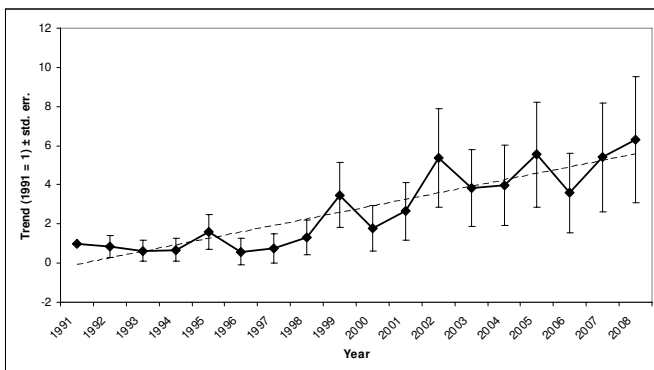


Figure 6: Trend of African Jacana population in Namibia from 1991 to 2008.

References:

IUCN 2009. IUCN Red List of Threatened Species. Version 2009.1 www.iucnredlist.org
 Wetlands International. 2006. *Waterbird Population Estimates – Fourth Edition*. S. Delany and D. Scott (Eds.), Wetlands International, Wageningen, The Netherlands.

Simmons, R.E. and Brown, C.J. In press. *Birds to watch in Namibia: red, rare and endemic species*. Ministry of Environment and Tourism and Namibia Nature Foundation, Windhoek.

Normally I never win anything but Gudrun's daughter, Illona, put my name on a competition entry form at the Tourism Expo in mid 2011 and shortly thereafter I was notified that I had won a camping weekend at Omandumba, some 50 km west of Omaruru in the Erongo Mountains. We deemed mid winter a bit cold for camping but when the weather started to warm up we decided to make use of this prize at the beginning of October (before it became unbearably hot in this land of contrasts in which we live).

The journey there was uneventful but extremely raptor poor with only two raptors (a pair of Tawny Eagles) seen in the course of the entire three hour trip. On arrival we set up camp and started our birdlist ticking off a few species before darkness fell.



Omandumba in the vicinity of the campsite

The resident pair of White-browed Sparrow-Weavers seemed to be habituated to humans and soon visited us at our campsite, approaching us fairly closely while looking for anything edible which might have been dropped. This was an interesting pair of birds – the female had been ringed and the male was missing his right foot and the remaining