

LANIOTURDUS

VOL. 44 (4) 2011

www.namibiabirdclub.org

CONTENTS

THOMSON N	Editorial	1
THOMSON N	2012 – The Namibia Bird Club’s 50 th Birthday	2
DEMASIUS E	A Different Kind of Birding Part 3: Birds on the Stamps of Namibia (1)	3
THOMSON N	Who were the People after whom some of our Bird Species are named? (Part 4 : Orange River Francolin to Wire-tailed Swallow)	9
KOLBERG H	Trends in Namibian Waterbird Populations 5 : Storks and Ibises	13
KOLBERG H	Summary of the 2010 Ringing Season	17
BROWN C	African Harrier-Hawk hunting in Palm Tree in Windhoek	20
FRIEDERICH G	Some Commotion on the Farm	21
DEMASIUS E	Falsterbo	21
THOMSON N	Lesser Flamingos at the Namibian Coast	25
DEMASIUS E	The Damara Tern Mating Game	26
THOMSON N	Nightstop Birding	28
NIDDRIE R	Walvis Bay Pelagic Trip	29
	RARITIES AND INTERESTING OBSERVATIONS	29

Editorial

Although I am the editor of Lanioturdus, Lanioturdus is not my journal. Lanioturdus is your journal (i.e. the members’ journal). However, for it to be truly the members’ journal it needs contributions from the members.

I have been fortunate in having been able to obtain sufficient articles to have allowed me to produce four editions for three consecutive years (actually this year there will be a special fifth edition) but it is somewhat disconcerting how few people actually contribute articles. Without the contributions of the likes of Eckart Demasius and Holger Kolberg I would have been very hard pressed to find sufficient material and I would then probably have found myself in another of those editor’s nightmare situations of having to write the bulk of the articles myself. A big thank you to all who have contributed especially those who contribute regularly - to the rest of you out there - why not try your hand at writing - if something interests you it will most probably interest other birders as well.

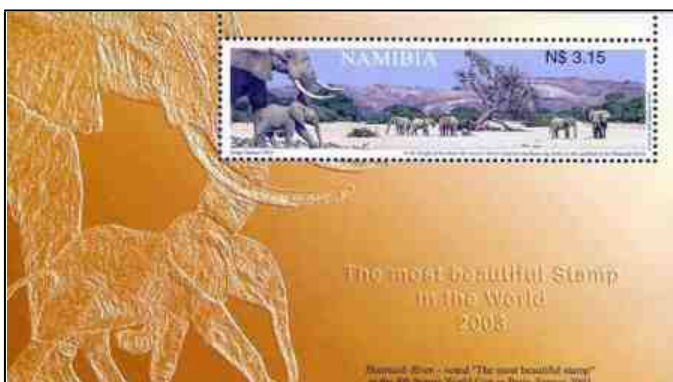
And it is not only articles for which I am looking. Your observations of rare birds, off range species, birds new to an area etc. are all worthy of a mention in Lanioturdus. We are not yet atlasing in Namibia and records of these sightings form valuable contributions to Namibian ornithology. I have mentioned it before - Lanioturdus is sent to the Niven Library of the Percy Fitzpatrick Institute of African Ornithology and the librarian, Margaret Koopman, has assured me that bird club journals are indeed used by researchers

The set of Cuvelai stamps consisted of three stamps, two of which have bird images on them. Another bird's eye view, this time from an Abdim's Stork over a traditional homestead, built on raised ground so as not to get flooded while the water passes it on either side. The second stamp has three birds on it, Grey Crowned Crane, Egyptian Goose and Lesser Flamingo flying over the Omadhiya Lakes, north of Etosha.



Once again the year must have ended on a high for Helge Denker when he was again the winner of the most beautiful stamp award when he took the honours at the eighth World Stamp Award held in Paris on 8 December 2003. This time the award was for the stunningly beautiful Hoarusib stamp, one of the five ephemeral rivers of Namibia stamps.

When I saw this stamp for the first time, I just thought to myself that I had never before seen a more beautiful stamp. Once again, well-deserved for Helge Denker and Namibia as a whole.



Who were the People after whom some of our Bird Species are named? (Part 4 : Orange River Francolin to Wire-tailed Swallow)

Neil Thomson

batqs@mweb.com.na

Orange River Francolin *Scleroptila levaillantoides* (Smith 1836) Named after Francois Le Vaillant (1753-1824). See above under Crested Barbet.

Pel's Fishing-Owl *Scotopelia peli* (Bonaparte 1850) Named after HS Pel (d 1854), a Dutch official in, and later governor of, the Dutch Gold Coast.

Red-faced Crombec *Sylvietta whytii* (Shelley 1894) Named after Alexander Whyte (1834-1905) who was government naturalist in Nyasaland (now Malawi) where he collected between 1891 and 1896. (This species is included here on the strength of Mark Paxton's observations in the Shamvura area [see *Lanioturdus* 43-2]).

Red Knot *Calidris canutus* (Linnaeus 1758) Named after Canute (circa 995-1035), king of England, Denmark and Norway. He was so greatly respected that his courtiers maintained that he had the power to stop the tide. They were of course proven wrong when this was put to the test! The connection between the bird and Canute is presumably due to its habit of running up and down the beach in front of the breaking waves although this characteristic is more noticeable in Sanderlings.

Retz's Helmetshrike *Prionops retzii* (Wahlberg 1856) Named after Anders Adolf Retzius (1796-1860), a Swedish anatomist.

Ross's Turaco *Musophaga rossae* (Gould 1851) Named after Lady Anne Ross (d 1857) who was the wife of the Arctic and Antarctic explorer Rear Admiral Sir James Clark Ross (after whom Ross's Gull and the Ross Sea are named). Lady Ross kept one of these birds in captivity for some ten years while stationed on St Helena. Gould described the bird as new to science on the strength of a drawing by

Lieutenant JR Stack and some wing and tail feathers of the captive bird. (There are unconfirmed reports of the occurrence of this species in the Caprivi Region).

Rosy-throated Longclaw *Macronyx ameliae* (de Tarragon 1845) Named after Amèlie, wife of Marquis Leone de Tarragon (1813-1896), a French nobleman and amateur ornithologist who visited Natal about 1841 and who collected birds in the Durban area.

Rüppell's Korhaan *Eupodotis rueppellii* (Wahlberg 1856), **Rüppell's Parrot** *Poicephalus rueppellii* (Gray 1848) Named after Wilhelm Peter Eduard Simon Rüppell (1794-1884) who was born in Frankfurt-am-Main, the son of a wealthy banker. He chose however to become an explorer and naturalist. Between 1821 and 1827 he travelled widely in Sinai, Egypt and Ethiopia and returned with a considerable array of zoological material which went to the museum of the Senckenburg Natural History Society, a sponsor of the expedition. He was in north east Africa again from 1830 to 1834 when he explored much of Ethiopia. Rüppell was the first foreigner to be awarded a gold medal by the Royal Geographical Society.

Sabine's Gull *Larus sabini* (Sabine 1819) Named after the English scientist and explorer General Sir Edward Sabine (1788-1883). In conjunction with Sir James Ross he conducted the first ever geo-magnetic survey of the British Isles. Sabine was at one stage president of the Royal Society.

Schalow's Turaco *Tauraco schalowi* (Reichenow 1891) Named after Hermann Schalow (1852-1925), a German ornithologist and author who worked with Reichenow in the Berlin Museum.

Sclater's Lark *Spizocorys sclateri* (Shelley 1902) Some sources maintain that the bird was named for Philip Lutley Sclater (1829-1913), an English ornithologist, collector and first editor of "Ibis", while others seem to agree that it was named after his son, William Lutley Sclater (1863-1944) who was director of

the South African Museum from 1896 to 1906 and president of the British Ornithologists Union from 1928 to 1933. WL Sclater completed the last two volumes of "Fauna of South Africa, *Birds*" after Stark, the original author, was killed by a Boer shell during the siege of Ladysmith. Ironically WL Sclater was also killed in an explosion when a flying bomb hit his London home during World War II.

Shelley's Sunbird *Cinnyris shelleyi* (Alexander 1899) Most maintain that it was named after Captain George Ernest Shelley (1840-1910) who was a nephew of the poet, Percy Bysshe Shelley. He resigned his commission in the Grenadier Guards to pursue his interest in ornithology. Shelley travelled in Ethiopia and South Africa and described 16 species of southern African birds. Carnaby, however, maintains that the species was named after Sir Edward Shelley (1827-1890), an English traveler who lived with indigenous people in Africa for a number of years and who was another nephew of the poet.

Southern Ground-Hornbill *Bucorvus leadbeateri* (Vigors 1825) Named after Benjamin Leadbeater (1760-1837), a leading London dealer in natural history material.

Southern White-faced Scops-Owl *Ptilotis granti* (Kollibay 1910) Named after Captain Claude HB Grant (1878-1958), a British ornithologist, collector and author. It was on Grant's expedition, financed by Charles Rudd, that the type specimens of Rudd's Lark and Rudd's Apalis were collected.

Souza's Shrike *Lanius souzae* (Barboza du Bocage 1878) Named after Jose Augusto de Souza (1837-1889) who was keeper of ornithology at the museum in Lisbon. De Souza was another who never visited Africa but wrote numerous articles on African birds.

Square-tailed Nightjar *Caprimulgus fossii* (Hartlaub 1857) Named after W Fosse, apparently a German, who collected in Gabon although Craig assumed that he was French because his collection was in the Paris Museum when this nightjar was described.

Stark's Lark *Spizocorys starki* (Shelley 1902) Named after Arthur Cowell Stark (1850-1899) who was a medical doctor from Torquay in the south of England and who settled at the Cape circa 1885. He travelled widely collecting specimens and making field notes. At the outbreak of the Anglo Boer War he volunteered for service as a medical officer and was killed by a Boer shell during the siege of Ladysmith. At the time of his death he was involved in the preparation of a four volume work on the birds of South Africa which was completed by WL Sclater.

Stierling's Wren-Warbler *Calamonastes stierlingi* (Reichenow 1901) Named after Dr N Stierling, a German medical doctor who collected specimens from 1897 to 1901 in what are today Malawi and Tanzania.

Swainson's Spurfowl *Pternistis swainsonii* (Smith 1836) Named after William Swainson (1789-1855) who was born in Liverpool and who left school at age 14 to become a customs officer and part-time artist and bird illustrator. After serving in the army until the end of the Napoleonic wars he travelled in Brazil for two years and returned with many specimens. Thereafter Swainson devoted his life to zoology describing a number of southern African birds and publishing a number of works, illustrating some himself. In 1840 he emigrated to New Zealand.

Swift Tern *Sterna bergii* (Lichtenstein 1823) Named after Carl Heinrich Bergius (1790-1818) a Prussian cavalryman, doctor and naturalist who collected the first specimen near Cape Town. He fought in the Prussian campaign against Napoleon before coming to the Cape where he worked for an apothecary. He later embarked on the full-time collection of specimens which he sent to Lichtenstein at the Berlin Zoological Museum. He died in poverty of tuberculosis. Carnaby maintains however that he was Russian.

Temminck's Courser *Cursorius temminckii* (Swainson 1822), **Temminck's Stint** *Calidris temminckii* (Leisler 1812) Named after Coenraad Jacob Temminck (1778 - 1858),

whose father had known and sponsored Le Vaillant. CJ Temminck was born in Amsterdam and initially worked for the Dutch East India Company. When the company dissolved Temminck devoted his time to mammalogy and ornithology becoming Director of the Rijksmuseum at Leiden where he built up the collections to be the most complete in Europe at the time while describing many new species. Later, however, he became a hoarder of rare specimens which he jealously locked away from other ornithologists.

Tristan Albatross *Diomedea dabbenena* (Mathews 1929) Named after Dr Roberto Dabbene, an Argentine naturalist.

Verreaux's Eagle *Aquila verreauxii* (Lesson 1830) Named after the brothers Jules (1807 - 1873) and Edouard (1810-1868) Verreaux. Jules first came to the Cape for three years at age eleven with his uncle. He returned to the Cape in 1825 and worked preparing specimens for Andrew Smith and for himself and in 1830 brought his brother, Edouard out to assist him. Edouard returned to Paris with many specimens for the family business which at the time was the most important business in the world dealing in natural history specimens. Jules stayed in Cape Town until 1838 when he returned to Paris and ran the family business with his brother until 1864 when he was appointed assistant naturalist at the Paris Museum where he later became director.

Verreaux's Eagle-Owl *Bubo lacteus* (Temminck 1820) Named after Jules Verreaux (1807-1873). See above.

Wahlberg's Eagle *Aquila wahlbergi* (Sundevall 1851) Named after Johan August Wahlberg (1810-1856), a Swede who studied chemistry, agronomy, forestry, natural sciences and surveying at Uppsala University. He came to Cape Town in 1839 to collect specimens for the Swedish Nature Museum. Wahlberg travelled widely in Natal, undertook an expedition to Zululand and made two journeys to the Transvaal before returning to Sweden in

1845 with a large collection of specimens. He returned to Cape Town circa 1853 and visited the present day Namibia while preparing for an expedition to Lake Ngami. He later travelled as far as Andara on the Okavango River before he was trampled to death by a wounded elephant.

White-browed Robin-Chat *Cossypha heuglini* (Hartlaub 1866) Named after Theodor von Heuglin (1824-1876), a German who had trained as a mining engineer but switched to ornithology. Heuglin was a reserved and religious man who rejected the theory of evolution but was committed to scientific research and was a gifted artist. He made several trips to north east Africa between 1850 and 1875 and published a two volume work, "Ornitologie Nord-Ost Afrikas".

White-fronted Bee-eater *Merops bullockoides* (Smith 1834) Named after William Bullock (1775-1840) who was an English traveler and naturalist. He made several trips to Mexico but never visited Africa. Bullock founded the Bullock Museum of Art, Armoury and Natural History in Sheffield.

Wilson's Phalarope *Steganopus tricolor* (Vieillot 1819), **Wilson's Storm-Petrel** *Oceanites oceanicus* (Kuhl 1820) Named after Alexander Wilson (1766-1813). Most sources regard Wilson as an American but he was a Scottish satirical poet (a contemporary of Robert Burns) who was jailed for writing a poem criticizing mill owners which was deemed libelous. He emigrated to America after his release from prison. Wilson was an accomplished artist and published "American Ornithology" in seven volumes.

Wire-tailed Swallow *Hirundo smithii* (Leach 1818) Most sources maintain that this species was also named after Sir Andrew Smith (1797-1872). (See above under African Broadbill). Clinning however states that it was named after Professor Chretien Smith (1785-1816), a Norwegian botanist and geologist who accompanied Captain JK Tuckey's expedition to explore the Congo River in 1816. It was on this ill fated expedition that the type specimen was collected, but Smith and most of the

scientific party together with a number of the crew, including Captain Tuckey himself, died.

References

Ashton EH 1980 - Southern African Ornithological Society. Bokmakierie Vol 32 No 2. Southern African Ornithological Society.

Brooke RK 1987 - Historical Sketch of Afrotropical Ornithology. Bokmakierie Vol 39 No 3. Southern African Ornithological Society.

Carnaby T 2008 - Beat about the Bush *Birds*. Jacana Media

Clancey PA 1982 - Nomenclatural Notes (Letter to the Editor). Bokmakierie Vol 34 No 4. Southern African Ornithological Society.

Clancey PA 1989 - The Founders of South West African Ornithology. Bokmakierie Vol 41 No 2. Southern African Ornithological Society.

Clinning C 1989 - Southern African Bird Names Explained. Southern African Ornithological Society.

Craig A 1989 - Whose Name for the Bird? Birding in Southern Africa. Vol 41 No 4. Southern African Ornithological Society.

Craig A 1990 - Whose Name for the Bird? Birding in Southern Africa. Vol 42 No 1. Southern African Ornithological Society.

Demasius E & C Marais 1999 - Birding in Namibia. Gamsberg Macmillan Publishers (Pty) Ltd.

Hockey PAR, WRJ Dean & PG Ryan 2005 - Roberts Birds of Southern Africa VIIth Edition. The Trustees of the John Voelcker Bird Book Fund.

Hopcroft C - Who were they? Bokmakierie No's 210 to 217. Witwatersrand Bird Club

Johansson P 2007 - The Trader King of Damaraland. Gamsberg Macmillan Publishers (Pty) Ltd.

Liversidge R 1957 - Edgar Leopold Layard, 1824-1900. The Bokmakierie Vol 9 No 2. South African Ornithological Society & Witwatersrand Bird Club.

McKay HM 1966 – Who's Who in South African Ornithology. Bokmakierie Vol 18 No 2. South African Ornithological Society.

McKay HM 1966 – Who's Who in South African Ornithology. Bokmakierie Vol 18 No 3. South African Ornithological Society.

McLachlan GR 1948 – Nature in S.A. keeps his Name – Sir Andrew Smith M.D. K.C.B Naturalist and Explorer. African Wildlife.

Roberts EL 1982 – What's in a Name (Letter to the Editor). Bokmakierie Vol 34 No 3. Southern African Ornithological Society.

The Illustrated Chambers Encyclopaedia 1906 – William & Robert Chambers Limited.

Trends in Namibian Waterbird Populations 5: Storks and Ibises

Holger Kolberg
Directorate Scientific Services
Ministry of Environment and Tourism
Windhoek

The fifth article in the series on trends in Namibian waterbird populations summarises count data for storks and ibises 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 six species could be determined but only one is increasing, the remainder are uncertain. None of the species considered has ever passed the 1% population mark in any of the counts.

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

5.1 Yellow-billed Stork (*Mycteria ibis*)¹

IUCN RDB Status: Least Concern

Namibia RDB Status: ?

WI Trend: Stable



Photo: Eckart Demasius

This stork has been recorded at most inland sites in Namibia in moderate numbers.

No of times counted: 84

No of times past 1% population (=880): 0

Maximum count: 96 at Lake Oponono on 25 January 2000

Past 1% population at: Nowhere

Trend analysis

Number of sites: 8

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