LANIOTURDUS

Newsletter of the Namibia Bird Club
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If you can get to these wetlands or any others, at anytime in January, then you must contact Rob Simmons (061-63131 x 258), and he will send you the appropriate forms and instructions. Only by co-ordinating like this can we avoid overlap in counting some areas, and combine forces in other areas.

If you are puzzled as to why July and January should be chosen for such a census, then joint the ranks; on querying this with the international organiser, it transpires that we have inherited this system from West Africa. If it proves useless to conduct censuses at this time things can be changed at discussions due in Rwanda in 1992. For now bear with us!

Thanks, let's make Namibian wetlands one of the best covered on the continent.

Dr Rob Simmons (Wetlands Biologist), Ministry of Wildlife, Conservation & Tourism, P/Bag 13306, Windhoek, Namibia.

AFRICAN MARSH WARBLER LONGEVITY RECORD

An African Marsh Warbler *Acrocephalus batisius*, ring number X 17871, was captured in mist-nets on 2 February 1991 in reedbeds at Sandwich Harbour (23 22 S; 14 30 E), near the Ministry of Wildlife house. The bird weighed 10.0 grams, had old, frayed plumage, and was not moulting. The bird was released shortly after capture. The warbler was recaptured and released the next day at the same locality.

This bird was ringed at Sandwich Harbour by Johan Stutterheim, sometime between June and October 1982, but unfortunately a ringing schedule with precise dates was not submitted, owing to Johan's untimely death.

Calculated from the last possible month of ringing (October 1982), and assuming that the bird was captured in mist-nets and ringed as a free-flying individual of unknown age, this represents a longevity record of at least 100 months (8.3 years) which is the highest thus far recorded for African Marsh Warblers (T. Oatley, in litt.). David Johnson recently retrapped an African Marsh Warbler of 83 months at Pietmaritzburg in Natal, South Africa, and Rod Braby retracted four birds at Cunene mouth last year which were at least 50 months old (T. Oatley, in litt.).

A considerable number of African Marsh Warblers have been ringed on the Namibian coast, primarily at Sandwich Harbour and Swakopmund, but also at Walvis Bay, Arandis and in the Skeleton Coast Park, and it would be interesting to determine whether there is any local movement of the species between suitable wetland habitats on the coast. Maclean (1985, Birds of southern Africa.

J. Voelcker Bird Book Fund: Cape Town) has suggested that African Marsh Warblers are intra-African breeding migrants, wintering in Central Africa. To date, my few retraps of African Marsh Warblers have all been at the original ringing sites (Sandwich Harbour, Arandis and Rundu sewage works, unpublished data).

Joris Komen, The State Museum of Namibia, P.O. Box 1203, Windhoek, Namibia.

NB! NB! ATLAS PRIORITIES!

The priority map which appears together with this notice (for want of a long-outstanding regional report!) is designed to highlight those areas which most urgently need attention. The priorities are as follows:

**Highest priority:** Quarter-degree Squares (QDSs) within Half-degree Squares (HDSs) with heavy outline; particularly those which are blank.

**Very high priority:** Any blank QDS.

**High priority:** Any QDS with a species total less than the suggested target for the region. Species totals are coded with the letters:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Code</th>
<th>Species</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A</td>
<td>&gt; 250   species</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B</td>
<td>26 - 99 species</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C</td>
<td>10 - 25 species</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>D</td>
<td>6 - 9 species</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>E</td>
<td>&lt; 6 species</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Medium Priority:** Any QDS with less than 200 species.

**Low Priority:** Any other unclosed square.

Even cards for low priority squares are valuable contributions and will be gratefully received but please do not send in cards for closed squares (blacked out) unless your list is exceptionally long.