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EDITORIAL

This copy of *Lanioturdus* is made up almost entirely of trip reports and observations made during trips around the country. This is encouraging in that it is clear that people are getting out and watching birds – and much of the country is getting covered. The information given in these articles is non-scientific for the most part, but important none-the-less. In Peter Kaestner's article on the North of the country, he reports the first record of Blackfaced Lovebird from the Caprivi for close on ten years. Tony Tree's article gives a brief account of an American Black Skimmer seen in Walvis Bay in February – a first record for Africa. Mark Paxton's account of breeding pelicans in the Chobe area is the first in many years. These articles are largely reports of observations given in a generalised way, but their value in putting important information into print cannot be stressed enough. The point I want to make here is that *anyone* can do it. You don't need scientific training, a degree in journalism or any birding credentials. In this sense I would like to encourage people to join the Club's outings and activities, write them up and contribute to the process of developing the Club.

With regard to outings and activities, the Club Committee as a whole would like to thank Daphne McGivern for acting as our activities co-ordinator over the past couple of years. Daphne put in a tremendous amount of work, and the success of our programme was in a large part due to her inputs. We wish the McGivern family well in Cape Town. We are now looking for a new co-ordinator – anyone interested?

I would also like to thank Carole Roberts for her inputs into *Lanioturdus* over the past year and for volunteering to put the December edition together. I will be away in Australia and the Netherlands until January 1999 and Carole will be handling the magazine. Please submit all contributions directly to her via e-mail at carole@dea.met.gov.na or through the Club's postal address.

EASTER WEEKEND ON TSUTSAB

Thorsten Ludwig
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Over the Easter weekend the Namibian Bird Club was invited to Günther Friederich's farm Tsutsab, north of Grootfontein. After the drive from Windhoek we met up with others in Grootfontein where it began to rain. We had rain all the way to Tsutsab where we arrived in the late afternoon and it was still raining softly. Detailed signs had been erected to indicate where to go. When we arrived the Osbornes and Friederichs were sitting under the Osborne's tent awning. Günther came to greet us and handed us a list of birds to be seen on his farms. We pitched our tents and soon all the birders gathered around to discuss the weekend's prospects.

Günther Friederich had worked out a programme for the whole weekend. The next morning he invited us to his house. On our way there we saw Burchell's Sandgrouse (*Pterocles burchelli*). My father imitated the sound of the Pearlspotted Owl (*Glaucidium perlatum*) and in the bush Chinspot Batis (*Batis molitor*) and Longbilled Crombec (*Sylvietta rufescens*) answered. We stood and watched the birds for almost for an hour.

We went further on to the house where we saw many other birds. We went for a trip to see an African Hawk Eagle's nest (*Hieraaetus spilogaster*). But the nest was empty – the whole nest had fallen down from last storm that occurred. Then we drove down to the vlei and decided to go back through the bush and again saw a lot of birds. Many spiders' webs blocked the road where we wanted to walk. Back at the house we drank something because we were as thirsty as camels.

Afterwards, Günther Friederich took us back to the camp and announced that he would pick us up again at 15h00 to leave for Muramba Bushmantrails to watch birds there. On the way there we again got some rain. We drove on the back of Günther Friederich's truck and got quite wet. When we arrived at the trails we first went to see the bird hide and found a porcupine in a trap. Günther took us along the trail where he told us about

the traps and many other things bushmen do. It was already getting dark and then Günther drove us home. There we made a braai under much drier conditions than the evening before when everybody tried to keep the fire going by holding his or her umbrella over the fire.

The next morning most of the people present had to leave again for home. We also went to Grootfontein for the day but we returned back to Tsutsab later that evening. On our arrival we found a message to go and meet up with the Friederichs and Osbornes who were busy ringing birds. They had caught a Doublebanded Sandgrouse, which was ringed by Tineke Friederich. We also caught a lot of bats.

The Easter weekend was a great success. We saw 74 bird species and we also identified four new species for the farm. Many thanks to Günther and Tineke for making it such a success.



SHORT NOTES

Honey Buzzard *Pernis apivorus*

A single bird was reported by Adam Riley from Avis Dam, Windhoek, on 31 August. This is an exceptionally early date for this species.

Steppe Buzzard *Buteo buteo*

Peter Kaestner reports a single bird flying over the International School in Windhoek during late August. This is also a very early record of this species.

Osprey *Pandion haliaetus*

The Osprey at Avis Dam has been present on and off through the whole winter. In early August it was seen being attacked by the pair of African Fish Eagles now seemingly resident at the dam. It was again seen in late