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## EDITORIAL

Once again this edition of *Lanioturdus* has been considerably delayed in its production as few articles have come in over the past six months. The rush of articles in July and August have been gratifying and I hope that this will continue in the future.

This is the last edition of *Lanioturdus* I will be editing for a while as I am no longer in a position to give the magazine the attention it needs to be successful. When I started as editor about six years ago, I had had no previous active involvement with the bird club up to that time. I got involved because I (and many other members) felt that a small informative and interesting local magazine was absolutely integral to making the club a success and birding in Namibia the pleasurable pastime it should be. I think we succeeded to a large extent and I would like to thank all of those individuals who contributed so much to making *Lanioturdus* a success. Special thanks must go to Carole Roberts who has done the layout of every copy to go out in the last six years and has done so with unfailing good humour. Coleen Mannheimer contributed the vast majority of the artwork for the magazine over the years and deserves a special mention. A special word of thanks also to Hartwig Dedekind, Dieter Ludwig and others who did the german editing, often at short notice. Willi Peters and the staff at Typoprint were always helpful and quick to get the magazine out on time. I would also like to thank the Bird Club Committee and the staff at the Scientific Society who did the posting and packaging, set up exchange agreements and answered many queries.

Tim Osborne has volunteered to take over the editing of the magazine from October onwards. I would like to wish Tim (and I am sure Laurel) well with the editorship in the future and encourage all of the contributors of the past to continue to support the magazine.



### Summary

About 16 active ringers currently operate in Namibia, and in the 1997/1998 season a total of 4408 birds were ringed. Visiting ringers also added to this total. Despite this relatively low tally, the year's total is much higher than the average of 10 years ago (~1000 birds p.a.) and several interesting recoveries were reported including two 20+ year-old birds: a Pale Chanting Goshawk and a White Pelican. Active ringing takes place mainly on the Okavango River, at the coast, and in two protected areas: Etosha and Daan Viljoen. We encourage all ringers to maintain their ringing activities and submit their schedules to SAFRING by June each year, not forgetting a copy to the Ornithology Section of the Ministry of Environment & Tourism. To get your permit simply send your old one to us with your ringing schedules and we will update it. If you wish to start ringing, the best way is to join one of the active ringers, learn the ropes and then apply to us, with a letter from the experienced ringer for a 'C permit'.

### Acknowledgments

Thank you to all those of you who have added to knowledge of Namibian birds through your ringing activities. Thanks also to Dieter Oshadleus and Cynthia Best of SAFRING for their efficient service and Elly Hamunyela for decoding and totalling.

Please note: when submitting schedules always write the species name next to the (old) Roberts' number on your schedule 1 SAFRING form. This avoids embarrassing mistakes such as Broadbills ringed in Namibia!

### References

- Brown, C.J. 1991. Bird ringing in Namibia. *Safring News*.  
Simmons, R. 1991. Squeezing the ringers, Namibian style. *Safring News* 20: 37-41.

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## VULTURE RING RECOVERY

S. Mallet-Veale  
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On 17 Feb 2000, at Mount Valley Farm, in the Helmeringhausen area, a farmer, Mr Hoffmann, found a dead vulture lying on its back. The bird was ringed with Pretoria Zoo ring No. 6-17431 with green and yellow colour rings.

Feedback was received from SAFRING stating that the bird was a Lappetfaced Vulture, ringed as a nestling in a Tsondab River nest, by Peter Bridgeford on 5 November 1994.

When I gave the farmer the feedback, he told me that whilst he was at that farm on the day prior to finding the dead bird, there were about 15 Lappetfaced Vultures sitting under a tree in the shade. There was no carrion or signs of, or remains of anything they were eating. They appeared to be simply resting in the shade as it was a hot day, and he did not disturb the birds at that stage. The dead bird was found not far from this spot on the next day and it is suspected that it may have died from poisoning.

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## PENGUINS IN DANGER

H. Becker

On 23 June 2000 the iron ore carrier *Treasure* – considered unseaworthy by the Cape Town harbour authorities – turned out to carry a destructive 'treasure' for the penguins of Robben and Dassen Islands. These two islands are home to 40% of the world's African penguin population – amounting to about 150,000. The carrier sank between these two islands, the fuel tank ruptured and about 400 tonnes of heavy fuel oil formed large slicks on the surface of the sea. Thousands of penguins became oiled.

The South African National Foundation for the Conservation of Coastal Birds (*SANCCOB*) immediately set up their main rescue centre in a warehouse at Salt River, and with the help of the International Fund for Animal Welfare and hundreds of volunteers, one of the biggest bird rescue operations in Southern Africa was started. The penguins needed medical treatment, cleaning and food – they also needed transport from the islands to the rescue centres and from there to Port Elisabeth, where they were released into the clean sea. Even clean birds had to be evacuated from the islands, so that they would not go into the oil. Cape Nature Conservation staff helped fencing in these areas. WWF-South Africa funded the helicopters. With funds from the UK Bird Life partner, Bird Life South Africa could also get involved. This rescue operation is considered to have cost tens of millions of rand.

Chris Harbard, of the Royal Society for the Protection of Birds, concludes his article in the Volume 3 Newsletter of BirdLife South Africa as follows: *'The rescue was made only possible through the generosity of people who gave up time and offered resources. It was a model of international cooperation – one which BirdLife South Africa is proud to have played a part in.'*

The Namibia Bird Club itself and Friends of the Birds in Namibia gave donations to SANCCOB to help the penguins. We – the Namibia Bird Club – would like to thank these generous bird lovers for their help – it was highly appreciated.

#### COMMITTEE MEMBERS

If you have any enquiries relating to the Namibia Bird Club, please contact any of the Committee Members listed below or send your enquiries to:

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#### CLUB OUTINGS AND ACTIVITIES

Please contact any member of the committee regarding outings and activities. Dieter Ludwig acts as the activities organiser so please confirm your attendance for any day or weekend outings with him. We have a number of members (both old and young) who do not have their own transport — if you have any place in your vehicle and are willing to give someone a lift, please let Dieter know.