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The first six months of this year have been agonizing for the Committee of the Club — we had taken the Club out from under the wing of the Namibia Scientific Society and now the question arose as to whether it was the right decision. The fundamental changes that were decided upon were fairly simple. Firstly we had to take control of our own administration, secondly we had to get more information out to members on a regular basis (i.e. get *Lanioturdus* out regularly) and we had to put a cohesive programme of events and outings together.

When we sent out our early appeal for members to indicate whether they were interested in joining the "new" Club we were a little concerned that only 80 or so people responded — we had "lost" nearly 50 members overnight!! This gave us some food for thought, but it was decided we needed to go ahead with the changes as these were designed to make the Club more appealing. Happily, we think we made the right decision. Membership is up to where we were before the changes, we have a broader membership base (with a good representation on the coast and in the country districts) and more people are signing up every month.

Our programme of events seems to be hitting the right spot as well. We are averaging about 20 people per outing, with some reaching the unbelievable level of over 50!! The evening lectures are also being well attended and it is gratifying to see new people coming to these activities.

Lastly, it seems that *Lanioturdus* may be taking off as well. Articles and information seem to be coming in at a steady pace and we were able to put this copy together with the minimum of begging for material. Many thanks to Coleen Mannheimer for her artwork! I think it is the first copy for a long time with minimal inputs from professional ornithologists!!

Many thanks to all of you who have supported us through this period of change. Much still remains to be done (most importantly we need to appeal to younger members) and we depend on you, the Club members, for support and guidance in the future. Lets keep on hearing from you.

hospitality, they not only offered a beautiful camping area but also prepared the site — even with running water.

It was a most enjoyable and relaxing weekend — we look forward to going back again in the future.



SHORT NOTES

Christopher Hines, Editor

Greater Flamingo *Phoenicopterus ruber*

Rob Simmons reports that a Greater Flamingo ringed as a juvenile (originally from Etosha) and released at Walvis Bay lagoon in early June 1994 was recovered in an exhausted state at Ghanzi, Botswana on 5/3/1997. The bird was nearly three years old and had travelled 766 km from Walvis Bay.

Breeding attempts by Greater *P. ruber* and Lesser Flamingo *Phoeniconaias minor*

Nest building and presumed incubation of eggs by both species of flamingo has been reported by Rod Braby and Warwick Tarboton at the Mile 4 salt works near Swakopmund. No eggs were actually seen but birds sitting on nest structures were presumed to be incubating. The attempt was not successful after jackals and other predators got into the colony.

Breeding was far more successful in Etosha this year with several thousand chicks being fledged in the Ekuma area on the northern edge of the pan. During a flight over the area in late May with Dr Conrad Brain, large numbers of free flying juvenile birds were noted. This is the first major breeding success in several years. The breeding population at Okerfontein was considerably less successful with most juveniles unflighted when the

water dried up. During counts on the coast in the coming months, look out for juvenile birds which are probably from Etosha.

Black Terns *Chlidonias niger*

During a wetland count on 27 April 1997 at the Omatako Dam, North of Okahandja, three Black Terns in full breeding plumage were identified by Dieter Ludwig and three other counters. This is a range extension for this species. Although very common on the coast at certain times of the year, inland records of this species are rare (see Borello, Herremans & Underhill's article in *Lanioturdus* 30(1). I have seen a single bird in the Nyae-Nyae area South of Tsumkwe in a year of exceptionally good rainfall (1989).

African Crake *Crex egregia*

Jeremy Duffield-Harding reports seeing up to six African Crake at the Moringa waterhole in Halali Camp Etosha, during early May. They were seen emerging from the long grass surrounding the waterhole. This species is eruptive and can turn up almost anywhere during periods of good rainfall. They occur regularly on small pans in the Tsumeb, Grootfontein and Tsumkwe (Nyae-Nyae) areas, as well as turning up on the coast occasionally — there are records from Mōwe Bay, Swakopmund, Walvis Bay and Gobabeb.

Great Spotted Cuckoo *Clamator glandarius*

With the good rains which fell over much of the country this year, many birds have continued breeding well into the dry season. Steve Braine reports Great Spotted Cuckoo juveniles just being fledged by Long-tailed Starlings in early May. According to *Robert's* the main breeding season for this species is mainly October-December and it is interesting to note the parasitic species such as cuckoos extend their breeding seasons in response to an extension of the breeding season of their host species.

Blue Crane *Anthropoides paradiseus*

The small numbers of Blue Crane resident in Etosha (principally in the East near Namutoni and on the Andoni flats) represent the only population outside of South Africa. Recent drastic declines in crane numbers in South

Africa through agricultural poisoning and habitat loss has brought more attention to focus on the Etosha birds. Unfortunately this population also seems to be declining and the Blue Crane may be the most critically threatened species in Namibia.

Harlequin Quail *Coturnix delegorguei* and Common Quail *C. coturnix*

Large numbers of both these species have appeared throughout the country following the good rains this year. Both species are known to be eruptive and highly nomadic, but little is known of their dry season habits. They are presumed to spend their winter in central Africa, but there are some overwintering records in southern Africa. It would be worthwhile recording any overwintering by these species in Namibia, especially following the good rains this year.

DIE EULE LÄBT SICH MASSIEREN

Sigrid Schmidt

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Die alte Eule, Tante Eule, war einmal krank. Sie saß dort ganzallein, die Augen waren geschlossen, und sie stöhnte: "Uumm, uumm! Uumm, uumm!" Da kam der Schakal vorbei. "Oh," dachte er, "die alte Frau sitzt hier so allein, die kann ich mir leicht fangen!" Er grüßte sie ganz freundlich: "Guten Morgen, Tante Eule!" - "Guten Morgen, Ohm Vossi!" - "Wie geht's?" - "Ach, es geht mir sehr schlecht, Ohm Vossi!" - "Warum geht es Tante denn schlecht?" - "Ach, Kind meines Bruders, ich bin krank, ich habe so Schmerzen im Genick!" - "Was kann man denn dagegen tun?" - "Rufe mal die Leute zusammen, daß sie mich verarzten. Und massiere mich doch hier!" jammerte sie. Ei, die alte Frau hatte gar keine Schmerzen im Genick! Und der Schakal war beileibe nicht der erste, der kam, um sie zu massieren. Wer sie massierte, den fing sie. Und die alte Frau wartete schon, daß sie auch ihn fangen und fressen konnte.

"Wie soll ich dich denn massieren, Tante Eule?" - "Oh, massiere mich nur, Kind meines Bruders, ich bin ja so krank!" stöhnte die Eule, und sie lief, um die Fettbüchse fürs Massieren zu holen, solche Fettbüchse, wie sie

schon unsere alten Leute hatten. - "Wo ist denn die Fettbüchse von Tante?" - "Hier ist sie doch! Hier ist sie doch, Brüderchen!" Da machte sich der Schakal daran, die Eule einzureiben und zu massieren. Aber bei jedem Streichen, bei jedem Drücken, griff die Eule zu und riß ein Stück Fleisch vom Schakal ab. "Hühühühühü, hühühühühü!" wimmerte und heulte er. Und die Eule fragte: "Na, was ist mit dir los? Was hast du denn, Kind meines Bruders? Massiere weiter!" Aber bei jedem neuen Streichen riß sie noch ein Stück Fleisch ab. "Ach, Tante, ich kann nicht mehr!" Während die Tante gerade wieder zupacken wollte, rannte der Schakal mit lautem "Hühühühühü! Hühühühühü!" davon.

Nun kam das Täubchen an. "Guten Morgen, Tante Eule!" - "Guten Morgen, Täubchen!" - "Wie geht es denn Tante?" - "Ach, mein Kind, ich bin so krank!" - "Wo ist denn Tante krank?" - "Hier am Genick! Ich habe schon auf dich gewartet. Massiere mich doch ein bißchen, meine Tochter!" Das Täubchen trat näher. Es begann zu massieren. Da packte die alte Frau wieder zu und riß auch ihm ein Stück Fleisch heraus. "Tüketük, tüketük!" heulte das Täubchen, und fort war es.

Da kam der Abdimstorch vorbei. "Guten Morgen, Tante Eule!" ... "Guten Morgen, Abdimstorch!" - "Wie geht es Tante Eule?" - "Oh, mein Bruder, ich bin so krank." - "Wo fehlt es denn Tante?" - "Komm, massiere doch mein Genick! Steh nicht so da und frage so viel!" - Der Vogel trat näher. Er kratzte der Eule ein bißchen am Hals und guckte. "Du lügst! Du bist ja gar nicht krank! Du lügst! Du bist gar nicht krank! Du willst nur die Leute umbringen mit deinem großen Schnabel! Ich bleibe nicht hier! Ich gehe nach Hause! Gororogük! Gororogük! Hier würde ich morgen früh tot sein. Nein, hier bin ich schon heute abend tot!" Und dann rief er laut: "He, ihr Leute! Die alte Eule lügt nur. Geht nicht und massiert sie! Sie will nichts, als uns alle umbringen. Seht ihr nicht den Schakal? Der Schakal heult deshalb heute noch: 'Hühühühühü!'"

Aus: Sigrid Schmidt: Tiergeschichten in Afrika. Erzählungen der Damara und Nama. Afrika erzählt 4. Köln: Köppe. 1995, 94-96.

Frei übersetzt nach mündlicher Überlieferung von Maria Magdalena Witbooi, ca. 75 Jahre. 1972, Mariental.

Die Erzählerin sprach vom Vogel Bloubaadjie. Eventuell meinte sie damit den Onderbaadjie, den Abdimstorch (Ciconia abdimii).

Verschiedene Varianten in der afrikanischen Märchenliteratur sind bekannt.