

# LANIOTURDUS

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## Editorial

We rely heavily on books such as Roberts VII, (often referred to as the “birders’ bible”), for distribution maps, biometric measurements etc. - but is the information in these reference books always correct? And, possibly more importantly, do we read it correctly? Mark Paxton’s observations on the tail length of the green/violet wood-hoopoes he measured at Shamvura (Lanioturdus 43-2) got me interested. My own records of the measurements of the southern masked-weavers occurring in Namibia which can be seen in this issue further stimulated this interest. While there are some very obvious mistakes in even the best of publications (the distribution map for malachite sunbird in Roberts VII is a case in point as is the distribution map for red-billed quelea in Roberts Field Guide – Chittenden 2007), some of these can probably be put down to editorial oversight and printers’ gremlins, but the

## Summary of the Summer 2010 Wetland Bird Counts in Namibia

Holger Kolberg  
Directorate Scientific Services  
Ministry of Environment and Tourism  
Windhoek  
holgerk@mweb.com.za

January 2010 announced its arrival with welcome and wide-spread rain throughout Namibia. The result of this was that we were expecting bumper counts at many of the inland wetlands, although the two coastal heavyweights would be expected to contribute the majority in terms of numbers, as usual.

During this count cycle 26 sites were counted, an increase on previous counts, in no small part due to the efforts of the Namibia Bird Club that is now counting many wetlands around Windhoek. A total of 228,484 birds of 92 species was counted at these sites, with Lake Oponono delivering the highest species total (44) and Walvis Bay the highest number of birds (116,108).

Only one Great Crested Grebe (*Podiceps cristatus*) was counted (at Mile 4), underlining this species' status as an endangered bird in Namibia. Pink-backed Pelicans (*Pelecanus rufescens*) appear to have established themselves at Hardap Dam with a healthy total of 24 birds recorded this time. A White Stork (*Ciconia ciconia*) was spotted at the Lüderitz Sewage Works. Lesser Flamingos (*Phoeniconaias minor*) made up just under 10% of the total number of flamingos counted, but an estimated 12,000 birds were seen on a pan to the west of the Ekuma River on the border of Etosha National Park (this figure was not included in the count). Only Wattled (*Grus carunculatus*) and Grey Crowned Cranes (*Balearica regulorum*) were seen, both at Lake Oponono. Amongst the waders, Common Redshank (*Tringa totanus*) were ticked at Walvis Bay and Mile 4 whereas a Black-tailed Godwit (*Limosa limosa*) appeared on the Sandwich count. The Gammams Sewage Works delivered a Grey-headed Gull (*Larus*

*cirrocephalus*) and an Osprey (*Pandion haliaetus*) was recorded at Hardap Dam.

Unfortunately, due to circumstances beyond our control, the Orange River Mouth was not counted this time and it is still a cause for concern that no sites in the north-east of the country i.e. Tsumkwe Pans, Mahango and East Caprivi are counted.

My heartfelt thanks go to the many counters, most of them volunteering their time and money to do the counts. Those that have submitted counts for the first time, please keep it up; the stalwarts – your efforts are definitely not taken for granted.

Note: See the last page of this edition for a table of the counts by location.

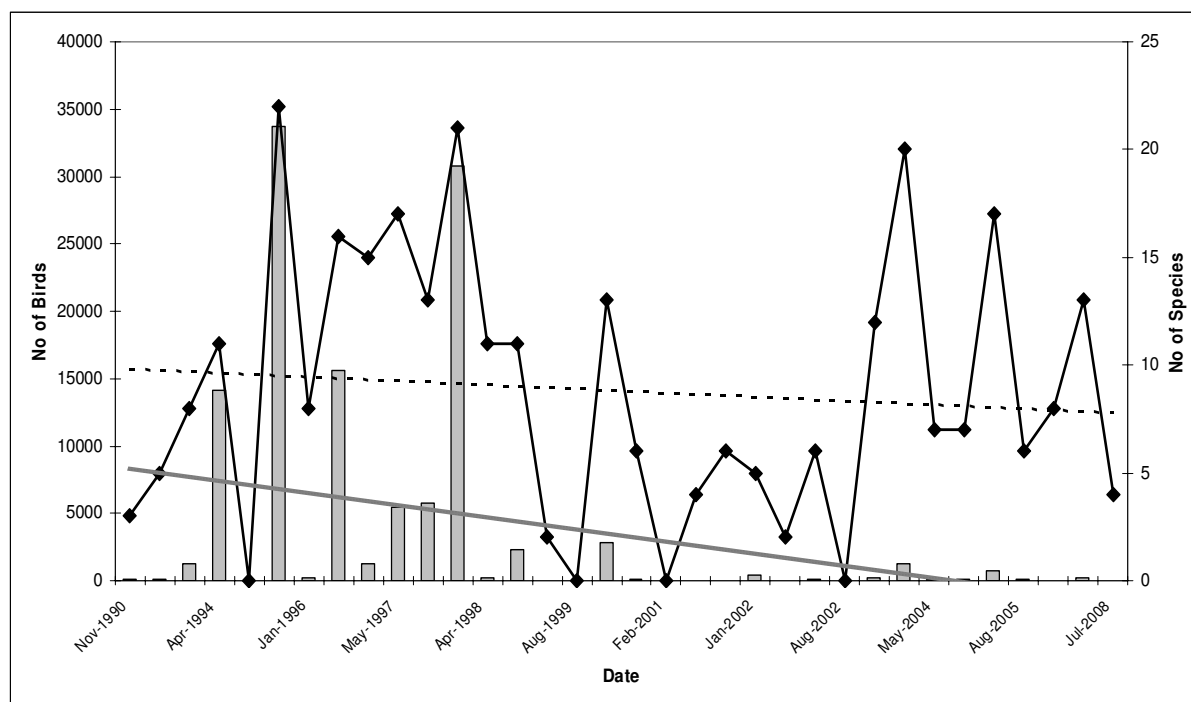
### Successful Release of Artificially Raised Swallow-tailed Bee-eaters, *Merops hirundineus*, (Swaelstertbyvreter, Schwalbenschwanzstint)

Sonja Bartlewski  
(sonja.michl@iway.na)

On 23 November 2009 a lady saw some construction workers digging out a nest of birds in a small embankment on a building site and kicking the nestlings away. She came across this scene at just the right time and was able to rescue all four birds alive. She then telephoned me to take over. And so this bunch of green creatures came to me. They turned out to be swallow-tailed bee-eaters aged about 5 days, 7 days, 9 days and 11 days. The oldest one had a broken wing and died a day later and the youngest one was too

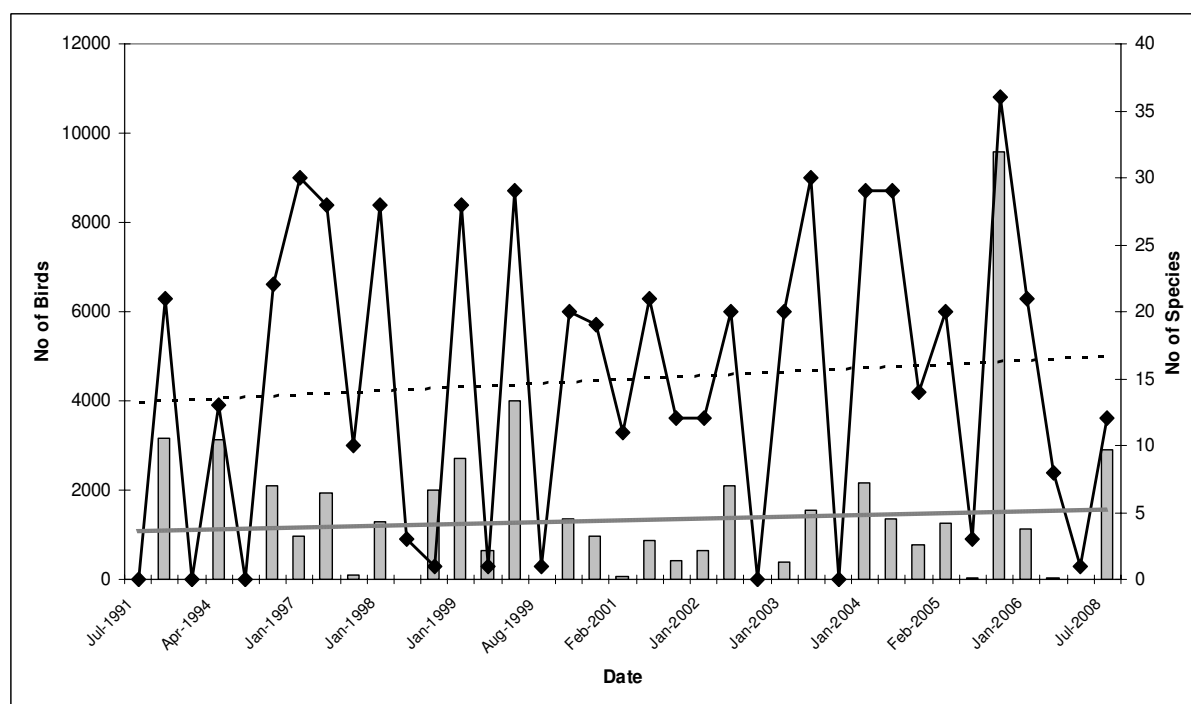
## Wetland Bird Counts in Namibia 3: Inland Wetlands

### 3.1 Ekuma River



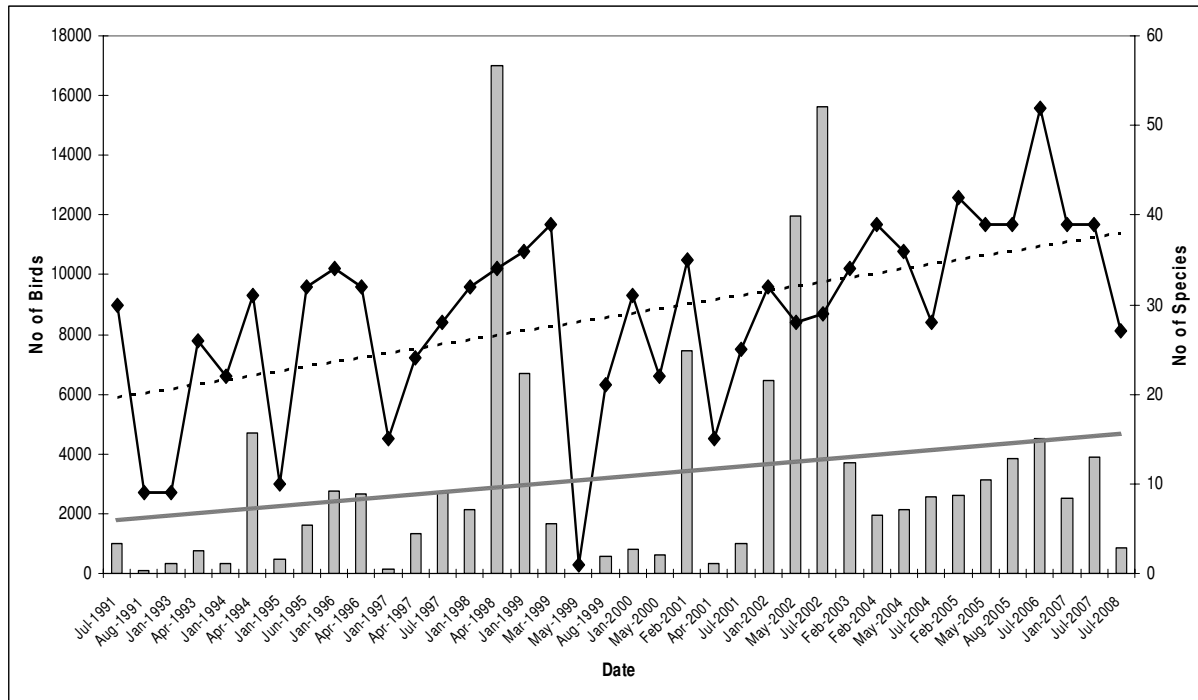
**Figure 11: Number of birds (bars, left-hand y-axis) and species (diamonds, right-hand y-axis) counted at the Ekuma River and the trend over the counting period (dashed line = species trend, solid line = bird numbers trend).**

### 3.2 Fischer's Pan



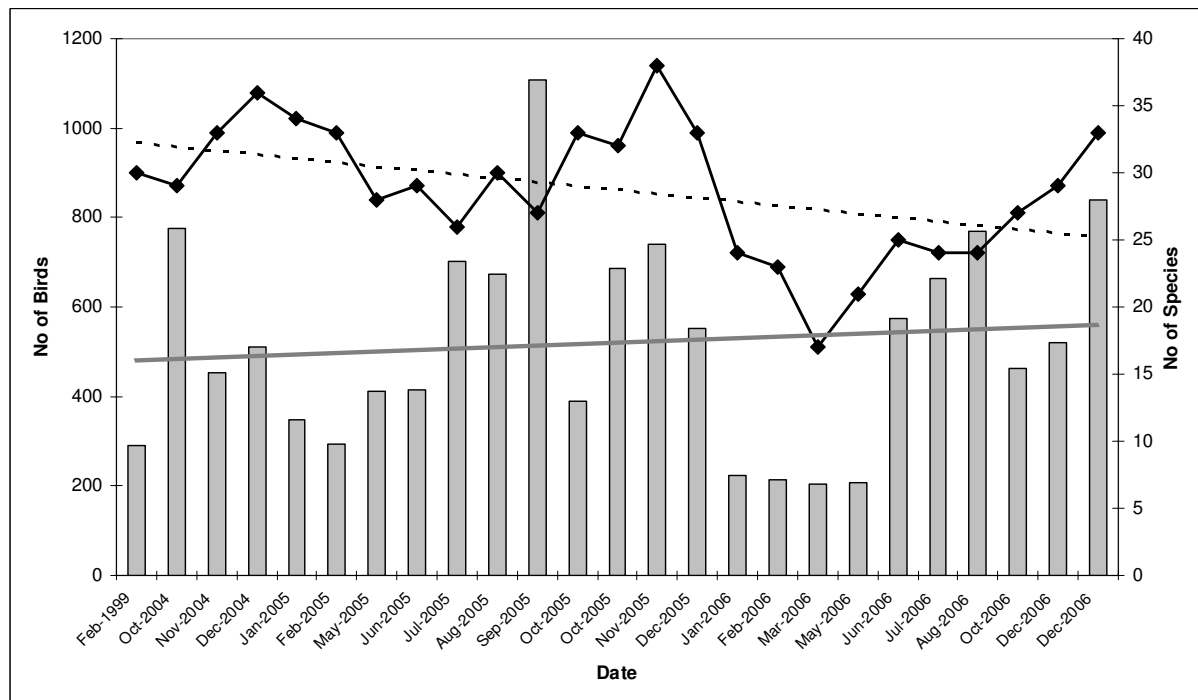
**Figure 12: Number of birds (bars, left-hand y-axis) and species (diamonds, right-hand y-axis) counted at Fischer's Pan and the trend over the counting period (dashed line = species trend, solid line = bird numbers trend).**

### 3.3 Lake Oponono



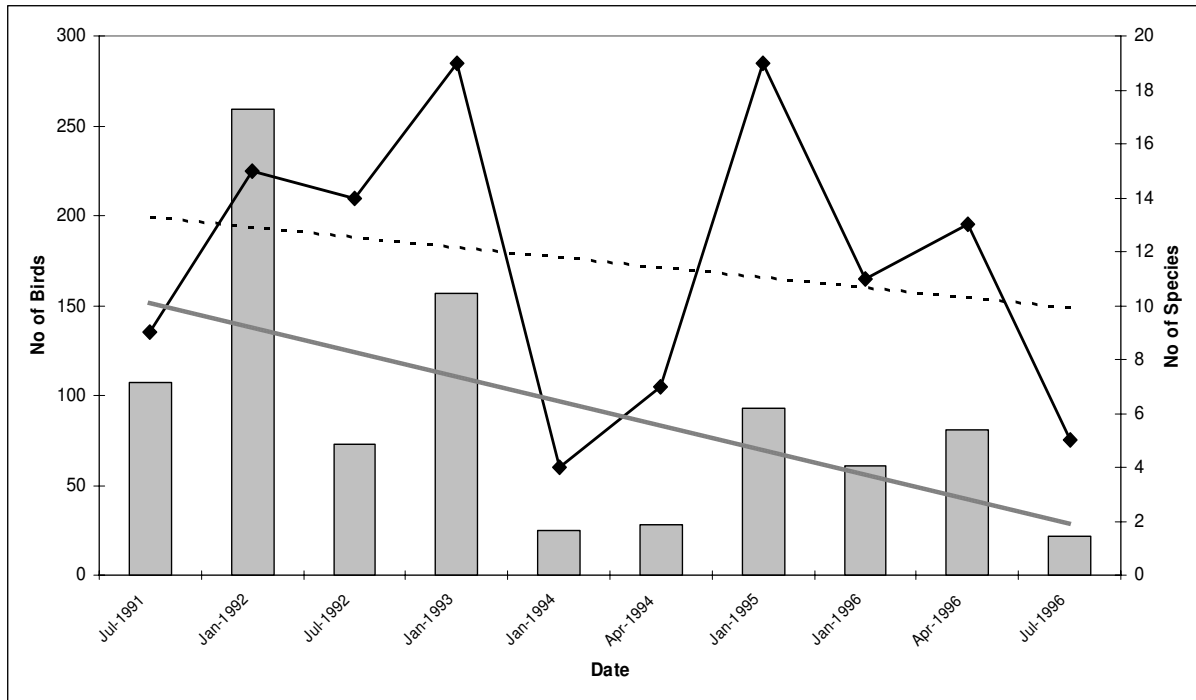
**Figure 13: Number of birds (bars, left-hand y-axis) and species (diamonds, right-hand y-axis) counted at Lake Oponono and the trend over the counting period (dashed line = species trend, solid line = bird numbers trend).**

### 3.4 Monte Christo



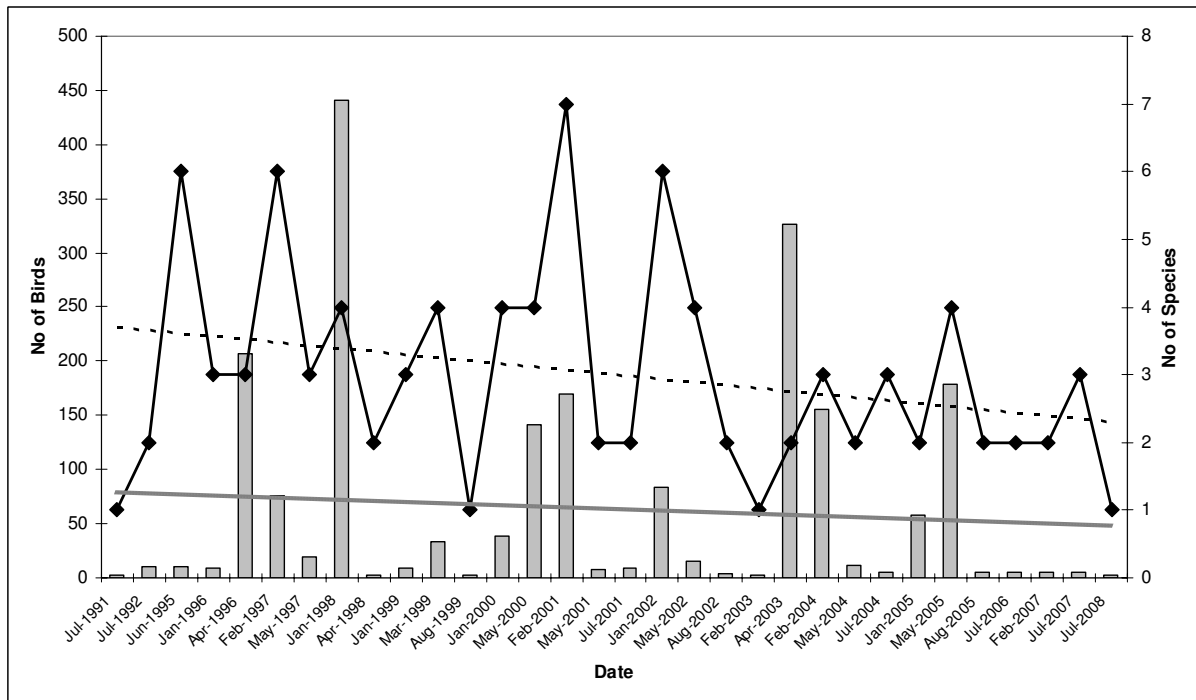
**Figure 14: Number of birds (bars, left-hand y-axis) and species (diamonds, right-hand y-axis) counted at Monte Christo and the trend over the counting period (dashed line = species trend, solid line = bird numbers trend).**

### 3.5 Nonidas



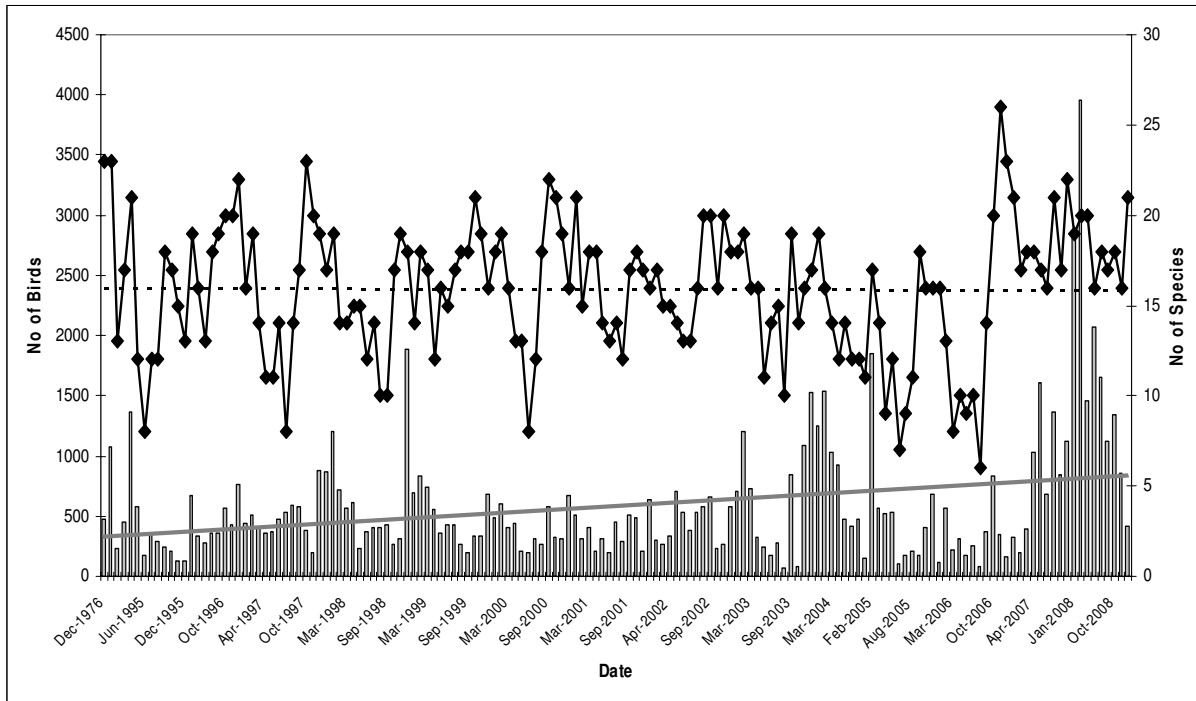
**Figure 15: Number of birds (bars, left-hand y-axis) and species (diamonds, right-hand y-axis) counted at Nonidas and the trend over the counting period (dashed line = species trend, solid line = bird numbers trend).**

### 3.6 Okondeka



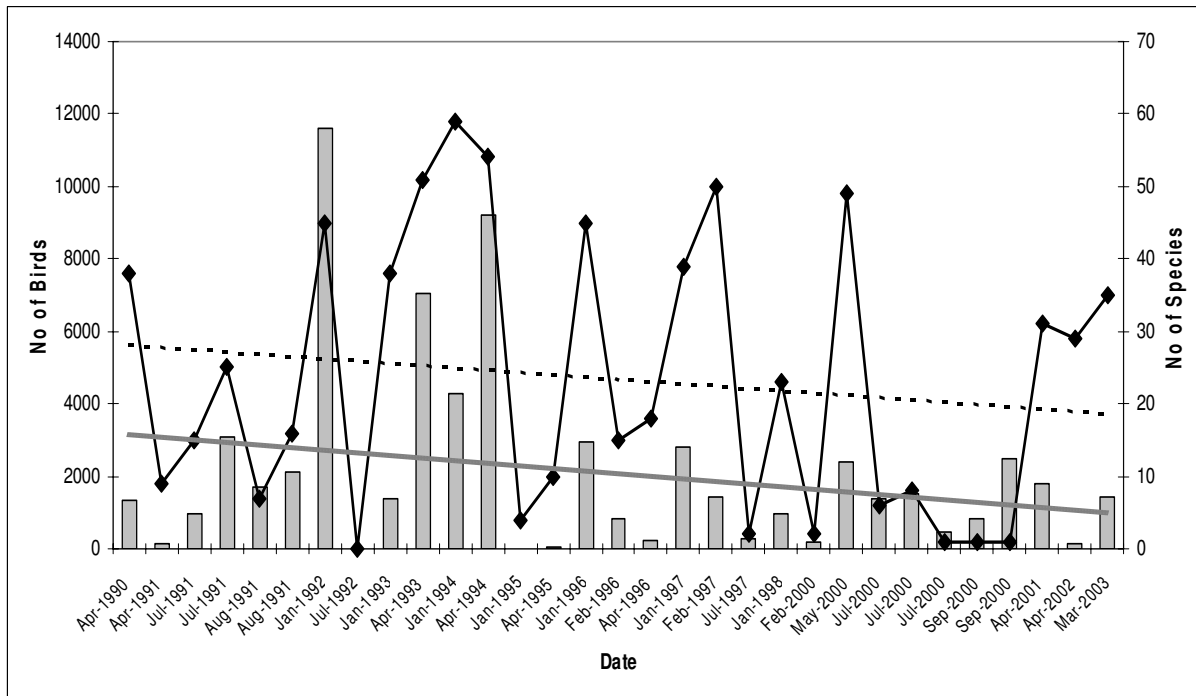
**Figure 16: Number of birds (bars, left-hand y-axis) and species (diamonds, right-hand y-axis) counted at Okondeka and the trend over the counting period (dashed line = species trend, solid line = bird numbers trend).**

### 3.7 Swakopmund Sewage Works



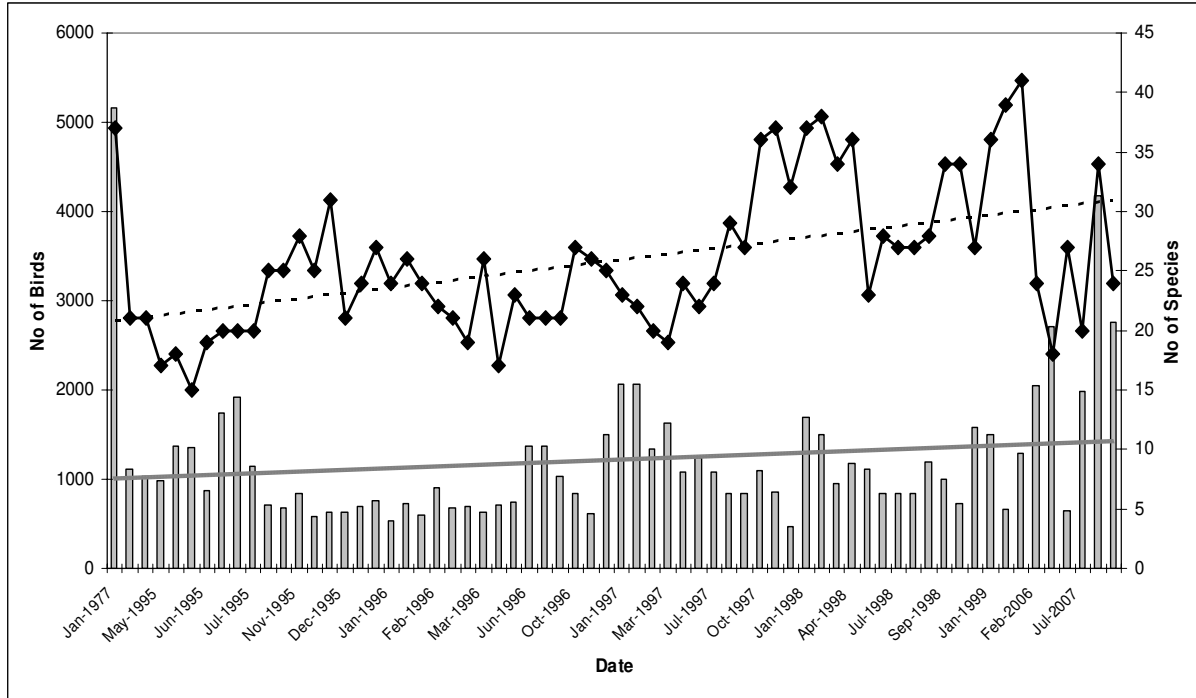
**Figure 17: Number of birds (bars, left-hand y-axis) and species (diamonds, right-hand y-axis) counted at the Swakopmund Sewage Works and the trend over the counting period (dashed line = species trend, solid line = bird numbers trend).**

### 3.8 Tsumkwe Pans



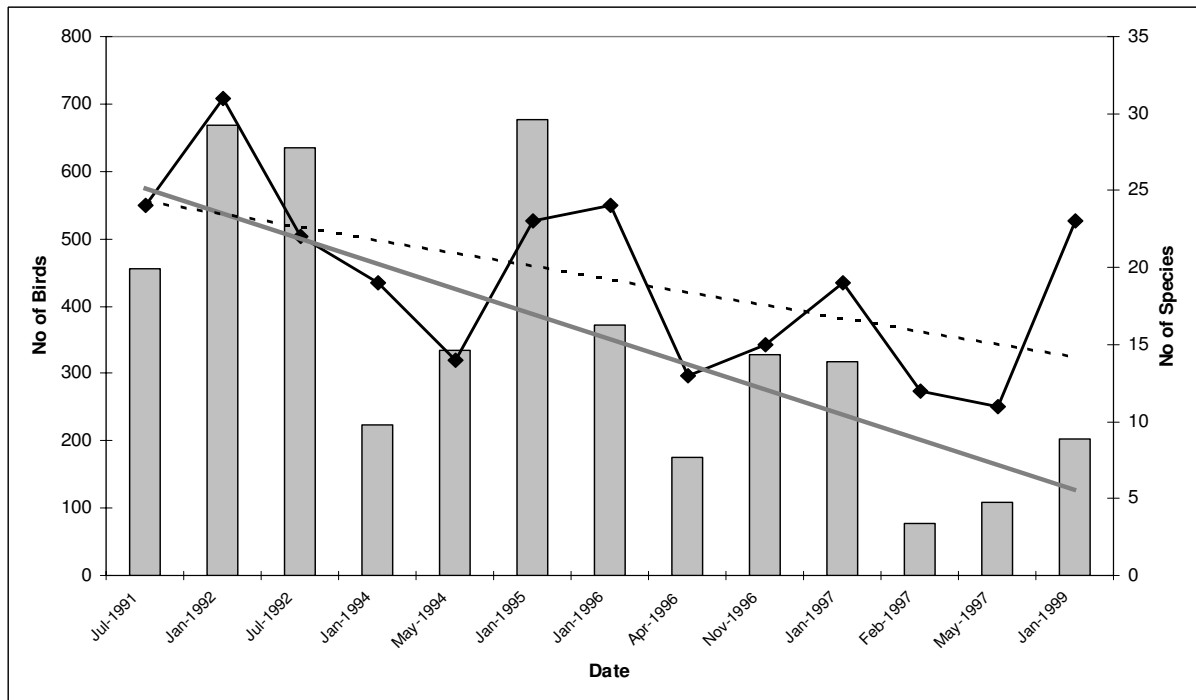
**Figure 18: Number of birds (bars, left-hand y-axis) and species (diamonds, right-hand y-axis) counted at the Tsumkwe Pans and the trend over the counting period (dashed line = species trend, solid line = bird numbers trend).**

### 3.9 Walvis Bay Sewage Works



**Figure 19: Number of birds (bars, left-hand y-axis) and species (diamonds, right-hand y-axis) counted at the Walvis Bay Sewage Works and the trend over the counting period (dashed line = species trend, solid line = bird numbers trend).**

### 3.10 Windhoek Sewage Works



**Figure 20: Number of birds (bars, left-hand y-axis) and species (diamonds, right-hand y-axis) counted at the Windhoek Sewage Works and the trend over the counting period (dashed line = species trend, solid line = bird numbers trend).**

## Summary of the Summer 2010 Wetland Bird Counts in Namibia

Site	Date	GREBES	PELICANS	CORMORANTS & DARTER	HERONS & EGRETS	STORKS	IBISES & SPOONBILLS	FRANKLIN'S GULL & SHOEBILL	FLAMINGOS	CRANES	GEESE & DUCKS	RAILS, GALLINULES & COOTS	FINFOOT & JACANAS	WADERS/SHOREBIRDS	GULLS, TERNS & SKIMMER	BIRDS OF PREY	ADDITIONAL SPECIES	Total	Species
Aeroplane Bay	01-Feb-10										2			11	4			17	7
Agate Beach	01-Feb-10													9	2			11	2
Avis Dam	23-Jan-10				6		1				19			31		1		58	10
Cape Cross	15-Feb-10	775		13625	1				35		36			462	578			15512	24
Ekuma River	11-Jan-10	31		1					33		213	7		76				361	18
Friedenau Dam	24-Jan-10			8	2			3			4	1	12	7		2		39	11
Griffith Bay	01-Feb-10			6					2		4			20	77			109	14
Grosse Bucht	01-Feb-10								9		4			6	38			57	7
Guano Bay	01-Feb-10			41							49			34	13			137	8
Hardap Dam	26-Jan-10		702	266	50	13	91				129					3		1254	18
Hoffnung Dam	31-Jan-10	1			7						92	4		25			7	136	8
Lake Oponono	12-Jan-10	102	76	8	193	119	15		774	12	1293	306	1	1016	124			4039	44
Lüderitz Sewage Works	01-Feb-10					1			4		43				15			63	5
Mile 4 Salt Works	29-Jan-10	625	16	40	1				719		379			333	940		3	3056	27
Monte Christo	24-Jan-10		1	12	68	3		1			68	14	5	38		1		211	24
Naute Dam	28-Jan-10	1	167	228	52	4	4				96	36		1		3		592	20
Okondeka	09-Jan-10										2			252				254	3
Radford Bay	01-Feb-10	9		3	1				26					30	49			118	15
Sandwich Harbour	13-Feb-10	8	175	3181	35				15487		162			58489	6469		6	84011	34
Second Lagoon	01-Feb-10			10	1				29					224	42			306	15
Shearwater Bay	01-Feb-10													6	2			8	2
Swakop River Mouth	19-Jan-10	11							7		15	28		13	60			134	18
Tsutsab Vlei	23-Jan-10										13			30				43	7
Walvis Bay	16-Jan-10	10008	360	787	104				21124		3034			50339	30351		1	116108	38
Walvis Bay Sewage Ponds	17-Jan-10	41	72		5				370		563	312		93	8			1464	24
Windhoek (Gammams) Sewage Works	23-Jan-10	11	1	52	68			1			56	166	1	26	1	2		385	25
<b>Total</b>		<b>11623</b>	<b>1570</b>	<b>18268</b>	<b>594</b>	<b>140</b>	<b>111</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>38619</b>	<b>12</b>	<b>6276</b>	<b>874</b>	<b>19</b>	<b>111571</b>	<b>38773</b>	<b>12</b>	<b>17</b>	<b>228484</b>	<b>332</b>
<b>Species</b>		<b>3</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>13</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>26</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>92</b>	