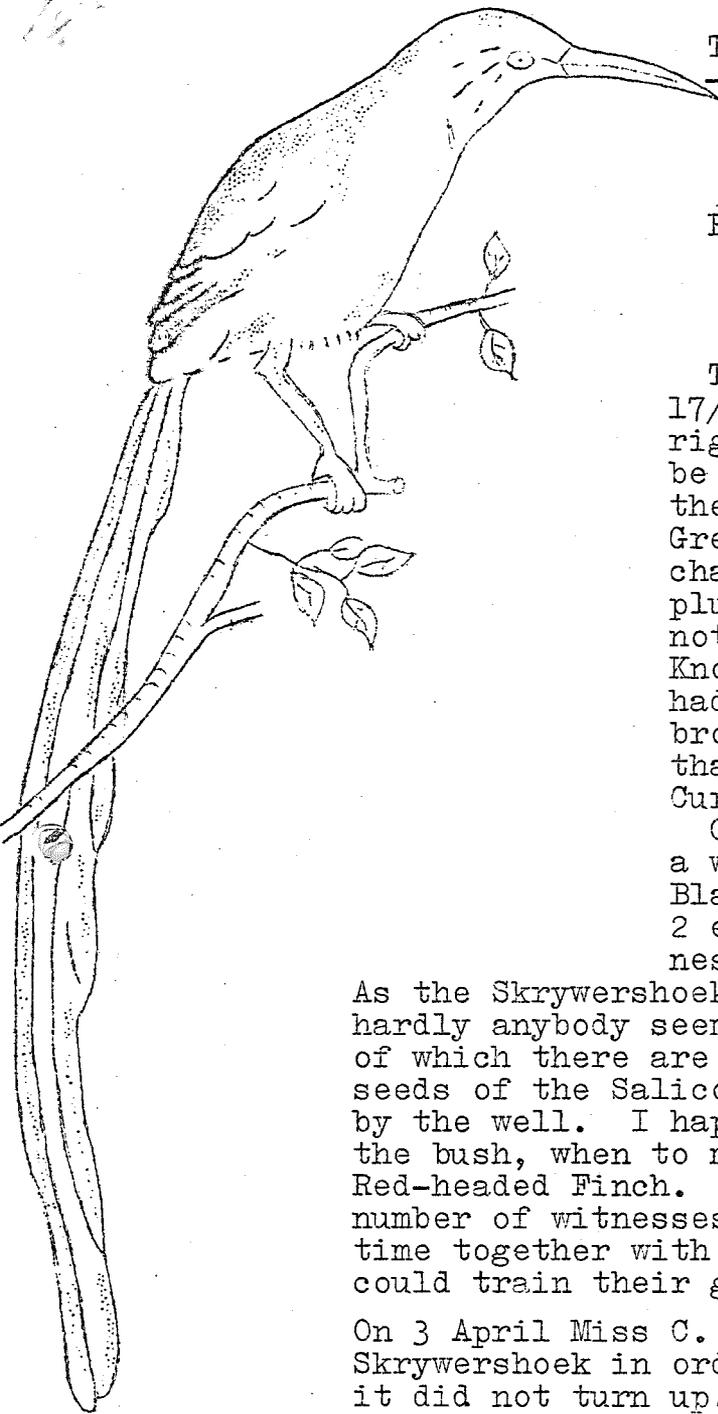


May 1962.

Editor: R.K. Schmidt, Striegau,
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This year's outing to Skrywershoek on 17/18th March was arranged just at the right time as the waders were still to be seen in their thousands. Many of them, especially Curlew Sandpipers, Grey Plovers and Turnstones, had already changed into nearly complete breeding plumage. Mr. Clarke was the first to notice that there were quite a number of Knots among the big flocks, and we all had a good view of them later; the brown colour of their chests was lighter than that of the far more numerous Curlew Sandpipers.

On Sunday morning a party set out for a walk to the Atlantic coast. There a Black Oystercatcher was found sitting on 2 eggs. Later Mr. Wilson found 2 more nests with 1 and 2 eggs respectively.

As the Skrywershoek outing is labelled "wader outing" hardly anybody seems to take a look at the bush birds, of which there are plenty. They seem to feed on the seeds of the Salicornia plants and are also attracted by the well. I happened to stroll along the edge of the bush, when to my greatest surprise I saw a male Red-headed Finch. When I returned to the place with a number of witnesses, the male showed himself again, this time together with the female, but before the witnesses could train their glasses on them, the birds flew away.

On 3 April Miss C. Robinson and I went again to Skrywershoek in order to see the Red-headed Finch, but it did not turn up. As a compensation we found a White-backed Mousebird sitting on a nest with 2 eggs. It was a glorious day with the Yellow Canaries singing lustily. The waders had decreased considerably, the huge flocks seen in the middle of March were gone. Several Red-

headed Finches were, however seen by Dr. Bull and his wife at Oosterwaal/Langebaan on 6 April.

Mr. John Grindley reports: When driving hom from Bains Kloof just after sunset on 4th February, I was surprised to see a huge flock of birds above the road just south of Wellington. They proved to be Naumann's or Lesser Kestrels. Most of them were hawking for insects in the warm dusk air, but many were already roosting in a couple of tall eucalyptus trees beside the road. Dr. Talbot and I estimated the size of the flock to be over 300, which is far more than I had ever seen together before.

Dr. Winterbottom writes: In News Letter 64 I made some comments on one of our neglected districts, Tulbagh. Here are some about another neglected district, Worcester. Only the area south of the Breede River is in our Club territory; and Gordon Maclean and I spent most of 21 December 1961 there, with the most satisfactory results. We began by identifying an immature Night Heron as a road casualty between Klapmuts and Paarl - first record of this species from the Paarl District. We then went over Du Toit's Kloof and via Raswonville to Brandvlei. The water was very high and we saw few birds on the vlei until we came to the hot springs. There we saw, first of all, a juvenile Sea Eagle

with its parents./.....

with its parents. Then, in three trees about 50 yds. from the shore, was a breeding colony of 20 pairs of Darters and 7 of White-breasted Cormorants. Three of the Darters' nests held large young. We went on to Stettyn and then made a deviation through Doornrivier, rejoining the tarred road at the Brandvlei Koöp, Wynkelders. About $4\frac{1}{2}$ miles before we arrived there, however, we came to a big dam. Besides a large flock of Egyptian Geese and at least 2 Shelducks, we were electrified to discover about 6 Spoonbills and 4 or 5 Wood Ibises (or Wood Storks). We then made a loop back through Rawsonville and Goudini to the Worcester-Ceres road and so back to Worcester. Here we lost our way and found ourselves on the direct Worcester-Doornrivier road. So we continued that way, noting Wattled Starlings in a mixed flock with European and Pied just after crossing the Breede River. The total number of new records for the C.B.C. part of Worcester was 14, including, besides those already mentioned, the Karoo (or Hartlaub's) Chat seen in two places, the Greater Honeyguide and the Common Sandpiper.

I can recommend Dr. Winterbottom's favoured spot, Theron's Bridge north of Tulbagh. I went there on 15 April and also saw the Olive Woodpecker (cf. News Letter 64). I was really delighted, however, when I discovered a pair of Sweet Waxbills with three young (fully fledged but still having black bills) in the bushes along the river. A Malachite Kingfisher was also there.

Dr. Winterbottom further reports: The Cape Wigeon is notoriously an irregular breeder; but it seems worthy of note that when Mrs. Rowan, my wife and I were making a census of the water birds on the Strandfontein-Muizenberg sewage vleis on 25th April, we saw, on the same vlei, one brood of 7 ducklings with their parent and at least 2 other birds in full wing-moult and unable to fly.

Mr. Birnbaum and Mr. Clarke were surprised recently to see a pair of Ground Woodpeckers on Table Mountain near the Upper Cable Station. Although the bird was fairly close, there was some argument about it calling, but after a time they realised it would make its Buzzard-like call with the bill only slightly open.

With the breeding of the Sugar Bird in full swing again, I have to report an observation which Dr. Broekhuysen made on 19 July 1961: At 1.20 p.m. I saw 2 White-necked Ravens flying low over the Protea and heath near Steenbras River mouth. After a short while they left, and I noticed that one of them was carrying something in its bill. When I put my glasses on, I saw that it was a Cape Sugar Bird. Although I did not actually see it, the Raven very probably caught and killed the Sugar Bird and was now flying away with it.

It has been decided to prepare a New Edition of the "Check List of Birds of the S.W. Cape". For this a special committee has been appointed, headed by Dr. Winterbottom and composed of Drs. Broekhuysen and Uys and Messrs. MacLeod, Martin and Schmidt.

A few copies of the 1955 Check List are still available and can be obtained by members, price 40c.

The Committee is very grateful to Dr. Winterbottom for producing an index of the first thirty numbers of the Cape Bird Club News Letter. This index will be reworked and will be for sale at 10c. per copy.

An appeal from Mrs. Rowan for assistance in developing systematic beach patrols is attached.

PERCY FITZPATRICK INSTITUTE OF AFRICAN ORNITHOLOGY

As announced elsewhere, the Trustees of the South African Bird Book Fund have initiated the preparation of further volumes in their monograph series. One of these will deal with the albatrosses and petrels of South African seas. The first stages of this work have already revealed how very scanty and inadequate is our knowledge of the distribution and seasonal movements of the seafoal living off our shores. Even the kinds of birds which may occur, regularly or as vagrants, are not completely known, and there must be many additions still to be made to the list of species recorded to date.

In Australia and New Zealand, much valuable information has accrued from the contributions of bird watchers addicted to beach-combing, and it is felt that in this country we might profitably follow suit. The Percy FitzPatrick Institute has therefore undertaken to conduct another co-operative enquiry in an effort to establish what seabirds are washed up along our coasts and the frequency with which they occur.

To this end, we would be very grateful for the assistance of any interested persons in developing systematic beach patrols. To be systematic, these patrols need not be regular or frequent, provided only that certain essential items of information are recorded. It is, for instance, important that all corpses found should be accurately identified. In doubtful cases, the observer can enlist the assistance of the nearest museum or send the specimen to this Institute. It is also important to include in the record such items as the date, the approximate number of miles covered on patrol and the full number of dead birds found, whether they be common species or rare.

A specimen record form is enclosed to show the type of data required. Further forms will gladly be issued to anyone who is willing to co-operate. Your help will be just as welcome and as much appreciated whether your opportunities are restricted to an annual holiday at the sea, or whether you are fortunate enough to enjoy a regular evening stroll along the beach; and all contributions will be acknowledged when the results are published.

M.K. Rowan.

CAPE BIRD CLUB

CHAIRMAN'S REPORT FOR THE PERIOD JUNE 2ND 1961 - APRIL 30TH 1962.

During the year under consideration the Committee met seven times. As usual the Meetings were well attended, once more an indication that Committee Members take their responsibility seriously.

One of the Meetings was a Special Meeting, called together to discuss the second Pan African Ornithological Congress programme, drawn up by a Sub-Committee of the Council of the South African Ornithological Society and which had been submitted to Branches of the S.A.O.S. for their comments and suggestions. Otherwise the Meetings only dealt with ordinary Club affairs and no important decisions or actions had to be taken. Application was made for this issue of ringing permits to some selected persons and these permits were received and distributed.

EVENING MEETINGS.

During the period under consideration eight Evening Meetings were held in the Department of Zoology at U.C.T. At the first meeting, Dr. Broekhuysen talked on his trip to South West Africa illustrating his account with colour transparencies. At the second Dr. Winterbottom talked on Nomenclature. Both previous speakers are well-known performers for the Cape Bird Club, but at the third meeting Professor A. Kipps, Head of the Department of Bacteriology, Medical School, Mowbray, gave a most stimulating talk on Viruses and Birds, which was especially interesting in connection with the high mortality among terns, mainly the Common Tern, which had recently occurred along our shores. At the fourth meeting Dr. Broekhuysen discussed Migration in Birds. At the fifth Mr. Martin read an excellent paper on Nests Seldom Recorded. This paper was so well received that pressure has been put on the author to submit it to the Bokmakierie for publication. At the sixth meeting Dr. Winterbottom gave a very interesting account of his experiences in the French Bird Paradise, The Camargue, where he had recently been. At the seventh Meeting, Mrs. Rowan gave an account of the many problems tied up with "The Mysterious Mousebird" and at the eighth and last meeting, Mr. Lestranger showed his new crop of colour transparencies on birds and their nests. What a successful year he had! Dr. Broekhuysen screened some film on birds of prey.

The Evening Meetings on the whole were not so well attended as usual. This was probably due to the fact that as a Programme Card had been issued at the beginning of the year, fewer circulars had been sent out by the Hon. Secretary. In future, circulars mentioning the particular Evening meeting will again be sent out a fortnight before the event to remind members.

FIELD OUTINGS.

The Club organised nine Field Outings. The areas visited were: Tamatie Vlei, Klipheuvel, Eerste Rivier, Mud River, Sir Lowry's Pass, Klavervlei, Vergelegen, Skrywershoek and Cape Point. These outings were again very popular and on the whole the weather was excellent, except for the Excursion to Sir Lowry's Pass but even in this case some hardy members attended. Miss J. Robinson and Mr. S. Clark took schoolchildren to Kirstenbosch and showed them the bird life there.

SUB-COMMITTEES AND SCHEME ORGANISERS.

Mr. John Martin and Mr. Stan Clarke again organised the many outings the club had during the previous year. The Club owes a special thanks/.....

special thanks to these two gentlemen for organising this very important part of the Club's activities. The large attendance at these outings most undoubtedly have given them satisfaction, indicating as it does, how much members appreciate their efforts. Miss J. Ethelston and Miss C. Robinson organised lifts for people who required them. Miss Troughton and Mrs. Chaundy looked after the tea during the Evening Meetings and they certainly deserve a most hearty thanks from members of the Club.

Mr. Schmidt again edited the News Sheet most efficiently and we thank him for his efforts. Mr. John Martin continued to look after the nest-record card scheme and apparently had a record year as he will undoubtedly disclose in his report. Mr. Morgan continued as Organiser of the Red Bishop Bird Scheme and will report on its progress presently. Dr. Winterbottom again looked after the "field-cards" and at several occasions pointed out in the News Sheet that certain areas badly need members' attention. Mr. S. Clarke was the recorder of behaviour observations. Dr. Uys was in charge of the Club's Library of Colour Transparencies. Dr. Broekhuysen looked after Migration Records, Cape Bird Club's Ringing Record Index and the issue of rings. He also continued with the Road Casualty Count, which on the first of March has been discontinued as it had been in operation for two years and will now be worked up. Some members of the Committee expressed their astonishment and I hope approval that the organiser of this Road-Casualty Project, survived and did not become a road casualty himself.

MEMBERSHIP.

The membership stands now at 245, which is a few more than last year. May I take this opportunity to urge members to bring on more new members? The course in ornithology, given by the Staff of the FitzPatrick Institute during the University Summerschool, resulted in many people joining the S.A.O.S., quite a number of them in the Cape Bird Club Area.

Again, in ending this report, I have great pleasure in thanking my fellow members in the Committee for their enthusiastic co-operation. For a very long time, the Committee of the Cape Bird Club has virtually remained the same. This time, however, several members have expressed their wish to stand down, partly to enjoy a well-deserved rest, and partly to enable new blood to come into the Committee. Any Committee, even hard-working ones like the C.B.C. Committee, becomes stale and needs new ideas.

Of those who will not be available for the incoming Committee, I like first of all to mention Mrs. Broekhuysen, not because she is my wife and Hon. Treasurer, but because she has been the Club's Treasurer since 1948. She has carried the Club's financial burden and commitments very courageously over the last 14 years and done her job very efficiently and modestly. This does not surprise me, but I feel should be brought to the notice of members. The Club owes her a very hearty thanks for devoted duty and if we had a certificate for this sort of thing she should certainly be issued with one. John Martin is another who has been in the Committee for perhaps almost as many years as the Hon. Treasurer, and who has also expressed his decision to stand down. All I can say is that this decision must be respected but it will leave a big emptiness in the Committee. John, we like to thank you for your punctual attendance to all our meetings over all these years, especially in view of the fact that you had to come all the way from Somerset West. A word of thanks to your wife also is probably not out of place. Dr. Uys has only been in the Committee for a relatively short time, but what a difference he has made. He certainly has shaken up the now perhaps rather stale Chairman of your club at more than one occasion with stimulating ideas and he very effectively took on the Secretaryship of the Club while

Mrs. White/.....

Mrs. White was overseas. Now he has decided to stand down. His reason for doing so is the fact that he will be the next Chairman of the South African Ornithological Society. He feels that he wants to concentrate on that job and do it well and one can only appreciate that. We like to congratulate him on becoming the new S.A.O.S. Chairman and may we say "au revoir" as far as the Cape Bird Club's Committee is concerned. The fourth member of Committee who likes to stand down is Mrs. Knipe. She was elected a Member of Committee last year. With Mr. Martin no longer on the Committee, she loses her transport and it will be impossible for her to attend Committee Meetings. Mrs. Knipe, may we say to you, "It was short, but it was nice while it lasted."

In ending this Chairman's Report I would like to express our special thanks to Mr. Jack MacLeod for once again auditing the financial books; Mr. John Perry for again donating one of his beautiful paintings to the Club as a prize for that member of the Club who has contributed most to its activities, scientific and otherwise and the Head of the Department of Zoology, Professor John Day, for the loan of the lecture hall and the library.