



NEWSLETTER - 71. NUUSBRIEF

July 1963, Julie

A new breeding season is about to begin in our area. It is therefore the appropriate time to remind you that several schemes have been organised by the Club which depend on the co-operation of all members. Just to mention a few: Nest Record Cards, Migration Records, Red Bishop Bird Enquiry. In this newsletter you will read about some new enquiries for which your help is asked. In spite of Dr. Winterbottom's directions for the completion of Field Cards (cf. Newsletter 67) and his detailed report in Newsletter 69, he still does not receive enough. So there is no excuse for anyone to remain a passive member.

Some rare records

Mr. Macleod and Mr. Martin saw four Whistling Duck on Paardevlei, Somerset West, on 11 July; apparently the first record of this species in Hottentots Holland.

Mrs. Gwen Lipp (Troughend, 2 miles west of Stellenbosch) saw several young Sacred Ibis (one ringed on left leg) and ten Spoonbills (only one of them showing red legs and red under the wings) on one of the farm dams in the first half of June. She would like to know whether they were recorded from elsewhere as she thinks they must have been sleeping near her farm.

Goeie raad vir lede wat fotografeer

Dr. Nel skryf: Die fopmetode is eenvoudig en tog baie doeltreffend. U kies n klompie lae bosse of struik uit naby n hoë een. Skuil so effens agter die bosse, maar dit is nie absoluut noodsaaklik nie, mits u klere nie te opsigtelik is nie. Skree of sis dan as volg deur die tande "skizz - skizz - skizz". Wissel dit kort-kort af deur n hoë suiggeluid, met lippe getuit, te maak. Die voëls beskou hierdie geluide as ang- of alarmkrete en kom ondersoek instel. U sal verbaas wees watter treffende fotos van hierdie rustelose kêrels geneem kan word. As daar n besondere uitstaande punt is, kan u akkuraat daarop fokus, die regte oomblik af wag, terwyl u so skree, en dan net die knoppie druk wanneer die voël daarop kom sit.

Mr. F. Sawkins reports about the African Nightjar

Miss Johns and Mrs. Bean of Kirstenbosch, having found a nest with 2 eggs (if you could call a few rough stones and sticks a nest) of a Nightjar on 23rd October, showed it to us for further observation. The camouflage was so perfect that it took the four of us at least five minutes of concentrated

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searching and scanning before we focussed on the sitting bird.

The head of only one chick was visible under the parent's breast, and we were within a few feet before we were quite sure that we were looking at the birds and not at a cluster of sticks and small stones.

The chick was almost fully fledged; on 24 October the parent and one bird were still present. On 1 November there were no birds at the nest, but on 8th November one chick was flying about quite freely in the shadows, with the parent in close attendance. On 15th November one parent and two chicks were flying about quite independently. We noticed that the duller the day, the more freely they moved about, which is no doubt consistent with their nocturnal habits.

Dr. Winterbottom appeals for more Field Cards

I have recently been analysing the Club's Field Cards by species by Districts by months, so that one can see at a glance which species are present in which Districts in which months. I have left out most of the purely marine species and some of the rarities. In some cases, no cards at all are available for certain Districts for certain months. Consequently ANY cards for that month and district would be welcome. The missing data are:

Caledon - August
Ceres - February, June, September, November
Clanwilliam - February, August
Malmesbury - May
Robertson - May
Tulbagh - May
Vanrhynsdorp - February, April, May, June, October,
December
Worcester - June

The following species (only) have been recorded for every month in the Peninsula, for which there are many more cards than for any other District; when they have also been recorded for every month in other Districts too, these are named:

Dabchick	Red-billed Teal
Rosy Pelican	Cape Wigeon
White-breasted Cormorant -	Southern Pochard
also Bredasdorp	Maccoa Duck
Reed Cormorant	Rock Kestrel
Darter	Black-shouldered Kite
Grey Heron - also Bredasdorp	Sea Eagle
and Hopefield	Jackal Buzzard - also Bredasdorp
Black-headed Heron	Marsh Harrier
Purple Heron	Cape Francolin - also Bredasdorp
Little Egret - also Hopefield	Purple Gallinule
Yellow-billed Egret	Moorhen
Cattle Egret - also Bredasdorp	Red-knobbed Coot - also
Night Heron	Hottentots Holland
Hamerkop	(Black Korhaan- Bredasdorp)
Sacred Ibis	(Black Oystercatcher - Bredasdorp)
Greater Flamingo	White-fronted Plover - also
Lesser Flamingo	Bredasdorp & Hopefield
Spur-winged Goose	Kittlitz's Plover - also
Egyptian Goose	Bredasdorp
African Shelduck	Three-banded Plover - also
Cape Shoveller - also	Bredasdorp, Hopefield &
Hottentots Holland	Hottentots Holland
Yellow-billed Duck - also	(Crowned Plover - Bredasdorp)
Bredasdorp & Hottentots	Blacksmith Plover
Holland	Curlew Sandpiper

- Little Stint
- Greenshank
- Avocet
- Black-winged Stilt
- Cape Dikkop
- Black-backed Gull - also
Bredasdorp & Hopefield
- Hartlaub's Gull - also Hopefield
- Common/Arctic Tern
- Sandwich Tern
- Swift Tern
- White-winged Black Tern
(Rock Pigeon - Bredasdorp)
- Cape Turtle Dove - also Bell-
ville, Bredasdorp &
Hottentots Holland
- Laughing Dove
- Black Swift
- Alpine Swift
- Speckled Coly
- Cape Coly
- Pied Kingfisher - also Bredas-
dorp
- (Thick-billed Lark - Bredasdorp)
- (Clapper Lark - Bredasdorp)
- (Long-billed Lark - Bredasdorp)
- (Red-capped Lark - Bredasdorp)
- European Swallow
- Rock Martin
- Pied Crow
(Black Crow - Bredasdorp)
- White-necked Raven
- Cape Bulbul - also Bredasdorp &
Hottentots Holland
- Sombre Bulbul
- Olive Thrush
- Stonechat - also Hopefield
- Cape Robin - also Bredasdorp &
Hottentots Holland
- Karoo Robin - Also Bredasdorp
- Cape Reed Warbler
- Swamp (Sedge) Warbler
- Grassbird - also Bredasdorp &
Hottentots Holland
- Bar-throated Apalis - also
Bredasdorp
- Neddicky
- Grey-backed Cisticola - also
Bredasdorp
- Levaillant's Cisticola
- Karoo Prinia - also Bredasdorp
& Hottentots Holland
- (Fiscal Flycatcher - Bredasdorp)
- Cape Wagtail - also Bredasdorp,
Hopefield & Hottentots Holland
- Tawny Pipit
- Orange-throated Longclaw - also
Bredasdorp
- Fiscal - also Bredasdorp
- Boubou
- Bokmakierie - also Bredasdorp &
Hottentots Holland
- European Starling - also Bredas-
dorp & Hopefield
- (Wattled Starling - Bredasdorp)
- Red-winged Starling - also Bredas-
dorp
- Pied Starling - also Bredasdorp
(Cape Sugarbird - Bredasdorp)
- Malachite Sunbird
- Orange-breasted Sunbird
- Lesser Double-collared Sunbird -
also Bredasdorp
- Cape White-eye
- Cape Sparrow - also Bellville,
Bredasdorp, Hopefield & Swell-
endam
- Cape Weaver
- Yellow (Cape) Bishop - also
Bredasdorp
- Common Waxbill - also Bredasdorp
- Mountain Siskin
- Cape Canary - also Hottentots
Holland
- (Yellow Canary - also Bredasdorp)
- Cape Bunting - also Bredasdorp

It should be emphasised that these records relate to the Field Cards only; no doubt many more species could be added if I had also consulted, for instance, my own daily lists for Princess Vlei and the Rondevlei records; but that was not germane to the present note, which is to draw attention to our lack of precise records for our area and also to see what conclusions could be drawn from those that exist. The Peninsula list of species recorded for every month contains 99 species; there are 44 such species for Bredasdorp, of which 13 are not in the Peninsula list; other Districts concerned are Hottentots Holland (12), Hopefield (10), Bellville (2) and Swellendam (1) but none of these are not in the Peninsula list. There are 35 other species which, while not recorded for every month from any single District, are recorded for every month from one or more Districts in the area.

Scrutiny of the Peninsula list reveals a surprising number of migrants in the "every month" category - Curlew Sandpiper, Little Stint, Greenshank, three or four Terns, two Swifts and the/.....

the European Swallow; and the Ringed Plover, Marsh Sandpiper and White-rumped Swift have been recorded for every month in one part of the South West Cape or another.

Confirmation of the migratory status of the Yellow-billed Kite and Banded Martin has come from this tabulation; and also a suggestion that the Namaqua Dove is a partial migrant, at least in the south - it seems to be generally absent from the area Peninsula-Hottentots Holland-Caledon-Bredasdorp-Swellendam from May to September inclusive, though there are two May and one June records. Further north, this does not apply and the species is abundant in the Wellington area in June.

Clearly chance has played a part in the lists of residents. For instance, it can hardly be significant that there are no records of the Black Duck for February or May, none of the Greater Honeyguide for July and none of the Sickle-winged Chat for May. With more cards, it may or may not turn out significant that there are no records of the Black Roughwing between May and August or of the African Marsh Warbler between March and July - we don't know. We have not, in the past, regarded these species as migratory but they may prove to be so. There are no records of the Stanley Bustard for November, December and January and this may prove significant too; and nearly all the records of the Black-headed Canary fall into the period July-November.

These are the CLUB'S records and future ornithologists will need to rely largely on them for their knowledge of bird distribution in the South West Cape in the 1950's and 1960's. The fact that they are seriously incomplete will not be compensated for by records buried in your note-book or, worse, in your head, where they will be inaccessible to future workers. MORE CARDS, PLEASE.

Sparrow and Sandplover Enquiry

The Percy FitzPatrick Institute of African Ornithology reports the following:-

Now that the Institute's Wagtail Enquiry is closed (the Report is nearly ready for submission to a journal for publication), it has been decided to replace it with two Enquiries, one designed to appeal to the home-keeping bird-watcher and the other to those who like to go further afield. The two are not mutually exclusive - anybody keen can take part in both. The Enquiries are:-

1. The Sparrow Enquiry, which we propose to confine to the Cape and House Sparrows. It is appreciated that this will rule out most observers north of the Limpopo but to extend the scope to cover other species would really demand coverage of areas in East and West Africa where there are not enough observers to do the job properly.

The Sparrow Enquiry links up closely with previous and existing work at the Institute: the Director has already published a paper and several notes on the spread of the House Sparrow; and the Research Officer is currently engaged in a full-scale investigation of the Cape Sparrow as a pest of fruit.

2. The Sandplover Enquiry, which will cover, not only our four species of resident Sandplover but the migrant Ringed Plover as well. A study by the Director published in Rev. Zool. Bot. Afr. at the beginning of 1963, showed that in the South West Cape, although each species had a wide range of habitats, many of which were the same for all five, nevertheless each species differed from the others in its main choices. It was further

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found that the breeding seasons differed from species to species in the South West Cape and in Natal; and that they also differed from place to place. Work on the behaviour of Kittlitz's and the White-fronted species in the South West Cape has been published by Professor K.R.L. Hall but little has been done for other species and in other places.

If you are willing to help in one or both of these Enquiries, please write to:-

Dr. J.M. Winterbottom,
Director,
Percy FitzPatrick Institute of African
Ornithology,
University of Cape Town,
RONDEBOSCH, C.P.

Chairman's Report
for the period April 30th 1962 - April 30th 1963.

During the year under consideration the Committee met eight times. All meetings were well attended and Members of the Committee took their duties seriously.

Of the many items discussed during these Meetings only a few can be mentioned:

The decision of the Council of the S.A.O.S. to omit in future from the Bokmakierie the chapter on "Domestic News" was discussed extensively and the Committee decided to approach the Council of the S.A.O.S. through our representative on that Council and ask for reconsideration of the decision.

The lack of Afrikaans speaking Members in the Club was raised and discussed and at the request of the S.A.O.S. Council the Club organised an Evening Meeting at Stellenbosch where a film was screened and a short talk on bird behaviour was given. The attendance was satisfactory but the number of new members enrolled was very disappointing. In view of this no other Evening Meetings in other centres away from Cape Town have been organised.

The publishing of a new revised Checklist of the birds occurring in the area covered by the Cape Bird Club was discussed on several occasions. This new Checklist is now in the printer's hands and will be available to members in the near future.

A new "face" to the Club's News Sheet was suggested and discussed. As the result of these discussions the first page of the News Sheet has been redesigned. It is now much more attractive and has a bilingual letter-head. Mr. J. Perry very kindly redrew the Cape Sugar Bird and made it look much more life-like.

Evening Meetings:

During the period under consideration nine Evening Meetings were held in the Department of Zoology at the University of Cape Town, while one special evening was held in the Department of Zoology at Stellenbosch University.

At the first meeting Dr. C.J. Uys talked on his trip to the Kalahari Gemsbok Park. Many interesting colour transparencies illustrated his talk. On the second Mr. W. Stanford screened a collection of his best bird slides and gave a running commentary. Dr. G.J. Broekhuysen gave two evenings; on the one he talked about "Bird Behaviour" and on the other about his recent trip to America. Mr. G.K. Lestranger showed a selected series of his bird colour-transparencies and discussed the ways they were obtained and the species they portrayed. Mr. R.K. Schmidt gave a very much appreciated talk on "How Birds fly". Dr. J.M. Winterbottom discussed the "Value of Skins in the Study of Birds"/.....

Birds" and this was followed by an evening on which Dr. C.J. Uys screened some of the excellent colour-transparencies he had recently taken. Mr. J. Perry gave a most interesting lecture on "How to paint Birds" and illustrated his talk with many examples of his own paintings and sketches. On the last evening of the current year Evening Meetings Dr. G.J. Broekhuysen showed some of his new films on Bird Life and Members could see on the screen rare current discoveries as breeding Red-chested Flufftail; Ant-eating Chat building at Mud River; Knob-billed Duck at the Athlone Disposal Works, European Roller at Somerset West, etc.

All Evening Meetings were well attended and, therefore, obviously appreciated by the members of the Club. A word of warm thanks to those who performed at these Meetings is certainly not out of place.

Field Outings:

Ten organised Field Outings were held. The areas visited were: Assegaaibosch, Jonkershoek; Tamatie Vlei Sewage Disposal Works; Spieka; Klipheuwel; Mud River near Mamre; Klawer Vlei, Faure; Du Toit's Kloof Mountain Pool; Rietvlei near Milnerton and Skrywer's Hoek, Langebaan Lagoon. The last outing was a week-end camp.

The response to these Field Outings was such that it has been decided in future to split people attending these outings up in small parties each with a leader. As usual the owners of the different areas visited during these Field Outings, very willingly gave permission for Club Members to visit their property and the Club owes them special thanks for their sympathetic attitude.

Sub-Committees and Scheme-Organisers:

The Club owes special thanks to the two tea-makers, Miss Troughton and Mrs. Chaundy, who during the past year took on the rather unrewarding task of looking after the tea during Evening Meetings. I can assure these two ladies that we are very grateful. We are also very grateful to Mrs. Winterbottom for organising lifts for people who have no transport and like to attend outings. They owe Mrs. Winterbottom a great deal of thanks. Mr. R. Schmidt again edited the News Sheet of which five issues appeared. He has done this most efficiently. An index to the first 30 issues of the News Sheet was compiled and is now available at little cost. This index should prove most helpful. Mr. H.K. Morgan continued to act as Organiser of the Red Bishop Bird Scheme. Dr. J.M. Winterbottom once more looked after "Field Cards" while Mr. S. Clarke remained Recorder of Observations on Behaviour. Mr. J. Perry was in charge of the Club's Library of Colour Transparencies and Mr. J. Martin continued to look after the Nest-Record scheme and during the year collected the filled-in Nest-Record Cards. Dr. G.J. Broekhuysen was in charge of Migration Records and the Club's Ringing Record Index. He was also in charge of the issue of rings to Club Members.

Membership:

The membership has remained rather stationary around the 245 mark. It has been for the last few years and we should really do something about this. It should not be so difficult for each present member of the Club to enroll one new member during the coming year.

In ending this report, I have great pleasure in thanking my fellow-Members on the Committee for their enthusiasm while serving on the Committee. It has made the task of being Chairman an easy one.

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Two members of the Committee have expressed their wish to stand down and to enjoy a very much deserved break. They are the Misses Joan and Clare Robinson. We have to respect their wish and therefore accept their decision, but I am convinced that I speak for the whole Club when I thank them most sincerely for their most valuable services while Members of the Committee

Special thanks are due to Mr. Jack MacLeod for once again auditing the financial books; to Mr. J. Perry for again donating one of his very fine paintings as a prize to be awarded to that Member of the Club whose activities during the past year have been most outstanding. A special word of thanks also to Professor John Day, Head of the Zoology Department of the University of Cape Town, and our Guest of Honour during our Annual Dinner, for making available to the Club the facilities of his Department.

CHAIRMAN

Field Course at Amanzi

The Percy FitzPatrick Institute of African Ornithology, in co-operation with the staff of the Port Elizabeth Museum, will run a Field Course in Ornithology at Amanzi, Uitenhage (by kind permission of Mr. & Mrs. J.P. Mackie Niven), from 21st to 25th October, 1963, both dates inclusive.

The course will include practical instruction in the study of bird behaviour, territory, nest records, census work and ringing; and the instructors will be Dr. Winterbottom, Mrs. Rowan and Mr. Skead of the staff of the Percy FitzPatrick Institute and Dr. McLachlan and Mr. Liversidge of the Port Elizabeth Museum.

Accommodation will be available at Amanzi; or students may camp if they prefer to.

There are no restrictions on applicants but the course is considered particularly suitable for those who have attended the Institute's Summer Schools in Ornithology, undergraduate students of Zoology, Honorary Nature Conservation Officers, Associate Workers of the African Wild Fowl Enquiry and members of the South African Ornithological Society, who will receive priority of consideration should there be more applicants than places. The maximum number for the course will be 25.

If you wish for further particulars, apply to:
The Director,
Percy FitzPatrick Institute of
African Ornithology,
University of Cape Town,
RONDEBOSCH

As every member will certainly be proud of sporting the South African Ornithological Society tie or scarf, an order form is attached (for further information see The Ostrich, 1962, No. 1, page 29)

Cattle Egret Enquiry

Information is needed for research work that is being done on the Cattle Egret (Tick Bird) by the Cape Department of Nature Conservation and the Percy FitzPatrick Institute of African Ornithology. Readers who are willing to help in this Enquiry (it does not matter how unimportant your contribution may seem - it may be valuable) are asked to write for further information to:

The Senior Officer,
Division of Fauna and Flora,
Private Bag 14,
STELLENBOSCH

The Hon. Secretary,
South African Ornithological Society,
c/o Percy FitzPatrick Institute of
African Ornithology,
University of Cape Town,
RONDEBOSCH, C.P.

Dear Sir,

I herewith wish to order

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Yours faithfully,
