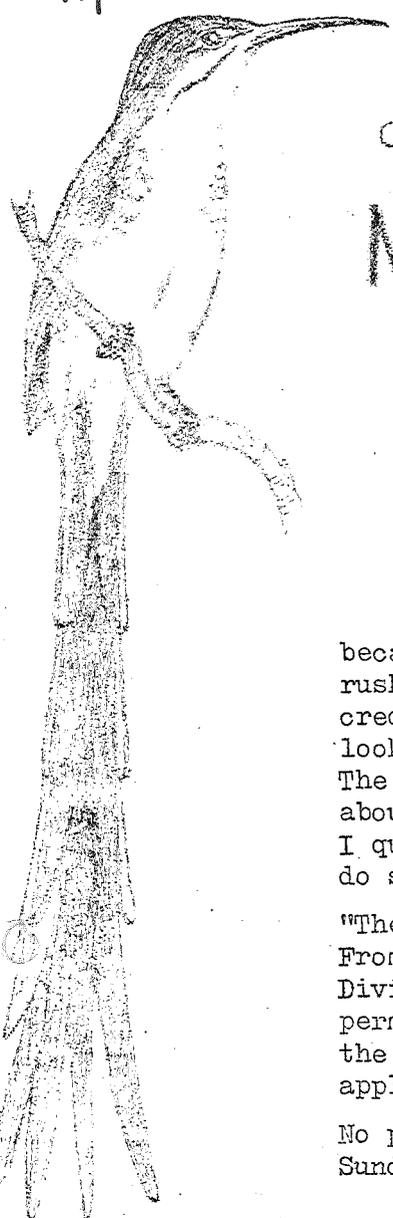


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CAPE BIRD CLUB : KAAPSE VOELWAARNEMERSKLUB

NEWSLETTER - NUUSBRIEF

Nº05

Nº05

August 1973

Augustus

Notes and Comments

Or perhaps the heading should be ERRATA AND CORRIGENDA because two gross errors ... I can scarcely say "crept" ... rather rushed into the last issue. The first one was that I mistakenly credited Prof. Broekhuysen with 25 years as Chairman, quite overlooking the 5 years of Col. R. Hallack's occupation of that post. The second gaffe was due to the wrong disposition of information about the visiting times for RONDEVLEI ... and to put this right I quote in full a letter from Mr Ernest Middlemiss, but before I do so I tender my apologies for the two slips.

"The Sanctuary is open to the public daily from January 1 to July 31. From Monday to Friday a permit, issued at the Head Office of the Divisional Council of the Cape, 44, Male Street, is required. The permit is valid for either the morning (from sunrise to noon), or the afternoon (from noon to sunset), on the day requested by the applicant.

No permit is required to visit the Sanctuary on Saturdays and Sundays. The gates are open at the following times:-

- January 1 - March 31 : 10 a.m. - 6.30 p.m.
- April 1 - July 31 : 10 a.m. - 5 p.m.

No permits are issued during the period August 1 to December 31, but application to visit the Sanctuary because of exceptional circumstances such as, for example, to show visiting ornithologists or naturalists the environment, can be made to the Warden.

The Rondevlei Bird Sanctuary was started, and is maintained, by the Divisional Council of the Cape, the local governing body which issues the Warden's annual reports"

The last NEWSLETTER seems to have pleased more members than it displeased and if this one like the woes of which Hamlet complained follows close upon its heels it is not because the acting Editor has a mania for seeing himself in typescript, but to act on a decision made at the Committee Meeting held on Tuesday June 26. At that meeting it was decided that in order to reduce postage costs, information about forthcoming meetings and excursions should be incorporated in the Newsletter. To do so effectively, the Newsletter should be circulated regularly. For the present FOUR issues a year were planned ... we are coming to the point of this ... and therefore to cover the August-September meetings we would get one out at the end of July ... this one, and a fourth, and the last of 1973, in September, to cover the remaining meetings of this year. Instead of members receiving a circular from the Secretary each month, they will find full details in the Newsletter and only receive a circular if last-minute changes are necessary. As this year is the 25th anniversary of the Club, it was decided too, that the September issue could appropriately have a part of it devoted to the early Newsletters. I have been going through these, and find that there is so much of interest in the first year, that there might be enough there to fill quite a number of pages. Actually, this year isn't the 25th anniversary of the Newsletter ... then called the "News Sheet" ... as the first one was circulated in 1950 ... so if the extracts reprinted in No. 106 please members, we can really go to town in 1975!

EDITOR : R. K. SCHMIDT "STRIEGRU" LYMPLIGH RD PLUMSTEAD CAPE
REDAKTEUR : LYMPLIGHWEG PLUMSTEAD KAAP

HOLIDAY: The policy of the NEWSLETTER has always been to concentrate on news of matters in the Club's area only. This has necessarily kept out a lot of items concerning the rest of the country. In No. 104 we printed the Broekhuysen-Martin account of their visit to the Karoo which was very much appreciated and at least one party went there at once. In order to provide an opportunity for this sort of thing, it is proposed to publish anything of interest arising away from the CBC area, under the heading of HOLIDAY and you, dear members, are implored, begged, urged, requested ... anything you like ... to send in your contributions for it. To set things in motion the acting Editor has written that short one about the Aughrabies National Park.

PEP-TALK: In R.K. Murton's "New Naturalist" book MAN & BIRDS (Collins. London 1971)...which can be recommended as top-class winter reading for members, reference is made to a survey conducted by the late James Fisher in 1966, into the status of the Fulmar Petrel "supported by about 600 voluntary observers --- a tribute to the support amateur bird-satchers give to a sound and valuable investigation".

What is important in that quotation is...or are...those 600 amateurs because most of them will have been people like ourselves...keen birdwatchers who have picked up enough knowledge of the birds to be able to co-operate effectively in such a project. Now, the obvious first requirement is that such people must know their birds. And this is where members of the CBC have a first-class opportunity of doing just that. The Field Excursions if full advantage is taken of the presence of the expert ornithologists who always accompany them, can provide access to the whole expertise of bird identification. ROBERTS, whilst indispensable, cannot possibly disclose the hundreds of small things that give the expert his ability to name the birds on the smallest of clues...flight patterns, calls, attitudes and movements and so on.

It would be a good practice to carry and use a notebook on such occasions not only because of the gradual accumulation of useful information, but because the very act of writing down fixes things in the memory.

And if the 1963 Check List seems to include a lot of birds...don't let the total be discouraging for by eliminating the oceanic birds and those that have only been recorded a handful of times, and a few more that you don't expect to see in your own range, it can be reduced to a less intimidating 200 in the Club's area.

The Percy Fitzpatrick Institute does not for the present propose calling for volunteers for any of its projects, but I have been asked to emphasise that it is always delighted to receive any offers of help from members. All you have to do is to telephone 69-5612.

A FIELD GUIDE TO THE BIRDS OF THE SOUTH AFRICAN SEA SHORE by Prof. G.J. Broekhuysen. The Secretary has a limited number of this book available to members at the special price of R1.50 (published at R4.50). Please contact him at any meeting or telephone 72-4150 (home) or 2-9569 (office).

Club Activities

Excursion to OUDEBOS. June 24.

The use of the word "privileged" is sadly overworked but may justly be applied to those members who came to Oudebos...a big turnout, especially for what is, after all, quite a long drive from Town...for this is not normally open to the public.

No one would claim that birds were much in evidence; indeed anyone who listed a dozen would have been lucky, but the admirable weather and the calm countryside were sufficient for most of us. There was a good turnout of experts too...so it was still more sad that there was so little for them to identify for us. However, the collective list was quite long

by the time all birds seen had been jotted down, and whilst such things if printed too frequently tend to be boring, it will interest those who were there to see just what was to be seen.

152	Jackal Buzzard	651	Karoo Prinia
181	Cape Francolin	672	Cape Batis
505	Rock Martin	686	Cape Wagtail
524	White necked Raven	709	Boubou
551	Sombre Bulbul	722	Bokmakierie
559	Cape Rock Thrush	749	Cape Sugarbird
581	Cape Robin	751	Malachite Sunbird
609	African Sedge Warbler	753	Orange-breasted Sunbird
612	Victorin's Scrub Warbler	775	Pale White-eye
618	Grassbird	855	Mountain Siskin
628	Grey-backed Warbler	857	Cape Canary
637	Neddicky		

ANNUAL REPORTS

Chairman's Report 1972-1973: During the year the Committee met eight times. Attendance at the Committee meetings was 81% compared with 84% the previous year.

Topics Discussed: 1. During the year the Cape Bird Club organised the Andersson Bequest Competition. The number of entries received was fair. The standard on the whole was disappointing especially in the senior group where only one prize could be awarded. The Club's special thanks are due to the organiser Mrs. N. Davis and her Sub-Committee Miss N. Williams and Miss M. Johns.

2. Through the enthusiasm of one of our members in Mossel Bay Mrs. P. Vincent the Committee could be instrumental in getting an artificial nesting platform erected and accepted by the White Stork pair which during the previous years nested on the Farm Arum Valley and whose nest had fallen down. This pair laid five eggs in the new nest but probably only two nestlings left the nest. An illustrated article about the whole matter written by Mrs. P. Vincent has appeared in the Bokmakierie.

3. The Club was host to Mrs. Pat Hall when she was presented with the Gill Memorial Medal.

4. The Committee decided to donate R30 to the Christmas Card Committee for prize money. The Club sold 1929 Christmas Cards and was able to forward R180 to the South African Ornithological Society.

5. For about the first time on record the Club received an invitation from a private organisation offering birding facilities. No need to say that the offer was gratefully accepted and that the facilities offered have been used by many members.

6. Representations were made to the Town Clerk of Saldanha Bay about a proposed causeway between the mainland and Marcus Island. A reply was received stating that the island was under Government control and that there was no intention of turning it into a pleasure resort.

7. The Committee reacted to the urgent request by the Co-ordinating Council for Nature Conservation in the Cape for financial support by granting a levy of 10c on each member for 1973.

8. Representation has been made to the Province to try and preserve Verloren Vlei in view of the development around this area with the Sishen-Saldanha railway line. Up to date no reply has been received.

9. During the absence of Mr. Rudolf Schmidt Mr. Philip Tongue has kindly undertaken the editing of the Newsletter.

Excursions and Evening Meetings: During the year there have been nine evening meetings most of which have been well attended. There were seven excursions which as usual were very well attended.

Membership: The Club has 384 members which shows a fair increase over the number of 357 last year. It is felt that the number of members for a big city as Cape Town is still much too small and I would like to urge members to try to enrol new members. Also may I remind members that the fact that they are members does not mean that the whole family can attend the evening meetings and the excursions. They can clear their conscience by paying the 50c family member fee.

Sub-Committees and Project Organizers: Teas: Miss N. Williams very effectively organized the teas after the evening meetings. We thank her and her many helpers very much indeed.

Outings: Once again Stan Clarke made sure that we had the necessary permits for the outings and that there were no last minute hitches. Many thanks, Stan.

Field Cards: Dr. Jack Winterbottom was again the organiser and will report on the year's activities in the next issue.

Nest Cards: George Underhill was the organiser and his report on the year's activities follows.

Migration: Gerry Broekhuysen was in charge but at the end of last year when the migratory species had returned decided to terminate his activity as recorder which he had carried out for 15 years. The S.A.O.S. at a Committee Meeting decided that the scheme should be continued. Geof Wilson is prepared to continue.

Ringling: Gerry Broekhuysen again acted as Branch Representative. Nearly all the organisation side of ringing has now been taken over by the National Ringing Unit. A short report on the Club's ringing activities follows.

Newsletter: Mr. Rudolf Schmidt was the editor. Although as usual he had to battle with too little co-operation from our members the Newsletters produced were very interesting and the Club is very grateful. We also are grateful to Miss N. Williams and Mrs. Mariette Broekhuysen for cutting the stencils after having typed the manuscript.

Slide Collection: Mr. Pfister looked after the slides and a short report follows. We are grateful to him.

The Annual Dinner in St. James Hotel was, I think, a great success and this was in no small matter due to Mrs. Davis's organisation. In this connection Mr. John Perry should be mentioned for once again producing those lovely menu cards. May I once again thank the Club very sincerely for the magnificent Perry painting of a Steppe Buzzard which was given to me at the occasion of the 25th year of existence of the Club. I shall treasure the painting and the gesture.

In conclusion I would like to thank Professors John Day and Roy Siegfried for allowing us to use the facilities of the Department of Zoology and the Percy FitzPatrick Institute.

G.J. Broekhuysen
Chairman.

REPORT ON THE NEST RECORD PROJECT OF THE CAPE BIRD CLUB FOR 1972:

During 1972 the contributors to the Project were: Mr. G. Benfield 7 cards, Mrs. M.H. Broekhuysen 10, Prof. G.J. Broekhuysen 8, Miss D.A. Clark 3, Mr. J. Cooper 11, Mr. A. Craig 23, Mr. M.H. Currie 9, Mr. Robert Donaldson 58, Mr. C.C.H. Elliott 6, Mr. M.I. Cherry 6, Mr. J. Harwood 7, Dr. H. Gottschalk 4, Dr. M.J.F. Jarvis 8, Mr. R.G. Jeffery 17, Mr. T.D. Longrigg 48, Miss A. Longrigg 1, Mrs. P. Hauptfleisch 28, Mrs. G. Lipp 1, Mr. P.S. Lockhart 74, Mr. Donald Mackenzie 76, Mr. John Moore 1, Mr. W. Mangold 3, Mr. Nico Myburgh 168, Mr. A.D. Montgomery 15, Mr. H.P. Pfister 17, Mr. Peter Raine 10, Mr. Hamish Robertson 140, Mr. Graham Robertson 18, Mr. J.M. Robertson 12, Mrs. M.K. Rowar 7, Dr. B. Rauch 4, Mrs. E. Smuts 15, Mr. R.K. Schmidt 51, Mr. C.T. Stuart 1, Mrs. B.M. Webb 3, Mr. G.D. Underhill 138, Mr. L.G. Underhill 7, Prof. C.J. Uys 5, Mr. M. Waltner 1, Dr. J.M. Winterbottom 28, Mrs. H.G. Winterbottom 3, Miss N. Williams 66, Dr. D. Whitelaw 5; in addition, Dr. G.L. Maclean submitted 44 and Mr. Peter Steyn 55 cards for nests they found on their short visits to the Western Cape. These two visiting members of the S.A.O.S., therefore, contributed almost 10% of the total of 1102 cards for our area.

The records covered 118 species; there were 10 or more cards for 35 of these. Instead of listing these as in previous reports I propose to comment on a few of the more noteworthy increases and absentees.

The previous total record for the Dabchick (6) was 14 cards in 1968. Last year's cards totalled 33 of which 18 were received from Hamish Robertson.

A total of 21 cards for the Black Oystercatcher (231) was the highest for the eight years I have been organiser. Mr. Jeffery recorded 11 at Bredasdorp and Dr. Maclean 7 in the Cape Point Reserve.

The Black-winged Stilt (270) had 35 cards; 29 of these nests I recorded in Rietvlei in the area now being destroyed by dredging operations. Another total, unequalled previously, is 70 cards for the White-fronted Sandplover (235) the main contributor being Dr. Maclean with 35 from the Cape Point Reserve.

After two years without a single record for the Avocet (269), 1972 produced 6 cards, 5 from Mr. Benfield from the Vredenburg district. A nest of the Chestnut-banded Sandplover (236) was recorded in 1965. Since then there has not been one until the two nests found by Mr. Longrigg at Yserfontein last year.

Is the nest of the Sombre Bulbul (551) difficult to find? Having recorded 3 last year Donald Mackenzie could, no doubt, give the answer. During all the 8 years only two were recorded for this species.

During the same period no cards for the Mountain Chat (564) were received but, last year, Prof. Uys found a nest with young in the Doorn River area of Worcester.

There was an apparent population explosion of the Cape Reed Warbler (604) last year. After only one card the previous year, it was a surprise to receive 31 in 1972. 16 of these were recorded by Hamish Robertson.

The Boubou Shrike (709) also seems to be a difficult character nestwise. There were two cards in 1966 then none until last year when four were recorded, each by a different observer.

At last we have the first record, at least since 1964, of the Grey Tit (525). It came from Miss Williams who also found a nest of the Mountain Siskin (855) in the Cedarberg.

Another first for eight years is the Black Crow (523) with 4 nesting records - 3 from Bredasdorp. After three blank years the Bully Seedeater (863) staged a come-back with 4 cards. Now to mention a few absentees from the records for last year. No cards for the Hamerkop (72); none, in fact, since 1964. None for the Secretary Bird (105) since 1966. None for the Water Dikkop (274) since 1969. During the last 9 years there has not been a single card for the Clapper Lark (466). The nests of these species are perhaps a little difficult to find and, for nesting records, we must rely on country members, but it should be easy for the Club to produce 3000 cards a year for the species which nest all around us and whose nests are so easily found. I suggest that every member who possibly can select a small area which can be visited regularly and record every nest throughout the year. - G.D. Underhill. Project Organiser.

RINGING ACTIVITIES IN THE CAPE BIRD CLUB 1971-1972: The following members of the Club ringed birds during the period under consideration: G.J. Broekhuysen 3, A. Brown 13, H. Pfister 347, R. Schmidt 108, G. Underhill 494, L. Underhill 251, M. Waltner 539, G. Wilson 1933. The total number of birds ringed was 3688 and this covered 92 species.

Of the following species more than 100 birds were ringed: Curlew Sandpiper 1341, Little Stint 176, Knot 159, Sanderling 108, African Sand Martin 103, Hartlaub's Gull 321, Cape Sparrow 172, Cape Weaver 160, Red Bishop 296.

It is interesting that again this season the number of European Swallows was relatively small - 31 -. One would like to know whether this was due to a sharp decrease in the number of European Swallows "wintering" in the South Western Cape or was it that they roosted somewhere else and that the roost was not discovered by our ringers? During the 1970-1971 season a total of 59 European Swallows were ringed. If we compare the total number of birds ringed during the 1971-1972 season with that of the 1970-1971 season we find a drop of 733 and 17 less species were ringed. This may be a good sign and an indication that ringing is now more concentrated and it may be the effect of the fact that permission to ring has been limited. It is interesting to note in conclusion that 48% of the birds ringed were waders reflecting the keenness of the wader group in the Club.

- G.J. Broekhuysen.

THE CBC SLIDE COLLECTION: The Cape Bird Club's slide collection was started about 17 years ago. It seems that at that time the Committee wished to create something of value and as an educational aid for its members, but, at the same time, something they might enjoy at leisure in their own homes. Many of our bird photographers have donated slides...sometimes duplicates, sometimes "second-best", among whom must be mentioned especially Prof. Broekhuysen, Mr. John Perry, Prof. C.J. Uys and Dr. Rauch.

There are now 250 slides in the collection, arranged in the same order as listed in ROBERTS. It is freely available to Club members, who must have a 35 mm projector (preferably with a ventilation fan!) and treat them with care..

As in any collection there are gaps which should be filled if possible; there are one or two slides too that are not up to standard which I should like to see replaced. I am certain that there are many members who could help with these two tasks. Slides of both Pelicans (Roberts 41 and 42) and Grey (54) and Black-headed (55) Herons could be better; Purple (57) and Night (69) are missing. It is hard to believe that there is no slide of either White (80) or Black (79) Stork, and the Cattle Egret (61) is also missing!

Among the ducks we need Spurwing Goose (88) African Shelduck (90) Cape Wigeon (98) African Shoveller (94) and Red-eyed Pochard (102) The only

slide in the Bustard-Korhaan department is of a female Black-bellied Korhaan (227). Among the shore birds we have no slide of the Black Oyster-catcher (231) and Chestnut-banded Plover (236). Palearctic waders are thinly represented and Common (291) Arctic (294) Sandwich (296) and Swift (298) Terns as well as the White-winged Lake Tern (304) are missing.

Rock (Speckled) Pigeon (311) and Red-eyed Dove (314) are needed as well as a better picture of the Pied Kingfisher (394); the Ground Woodpecker (445) is the only member of that family represented, but with exquisite pictures!

Has anybody got slides of Larks, Anteating Chats (575), Pearl-breasted Swallows (498) or any Crows or Ravens? They would be very welcome. There are plenty of European Starlings (733) about, but none in our slide collection!

Although there are gaps, it is more than worth your while to see what we have. Why not have your own private bird evening at home with tea and cake?

— H.P. Pfister

Members wishing to have the loan of the SLIDE LIBRARY should telephone Mr. Pfister at 71.3176, and in case of any difficulty (though there oughtn't to BE any) badger the Secretary.

MEMBERS' NOTES AND REPORTS

Note: The following notes from Somerset West only reached the acting Editor on July 10, owing to the shift in responsibility from Plumstead to Newlands.

Secretary Bird (105) One observed on March 23 soaring at quite a low altitude over the Somerset West suburb of Westridge. Two weeks earlier one was seen over de Beers Fertiliser factory. The curator of the Helderberg Nature Reserve saw a pair in the reserve. It is felt that these notes are of interest in view of the increasing development of the area. I know of at least one pair in the Hottentots Holland area.

Spotted Eagle Owl (368) A pair heard calling in the Pines at my residence at Somerset West on March 15, on a bright moonlight night, and later one bird was seen. This is the first record by this observer for 18 months and the birds are now scarce in the district.

Lanner Falcon (114) On February 3 a female Lanner was seen perched on a barbed wire fence skirting a burnt-out patch of pasture near de Beers....it flew off and landed on a green patch of the pasture. After a while it flew into a tall pine-tree and remained there until a pair of Steppe Buzzards flew over the burnt ground, when it zoomed out of the tree and proceeded to dive-bomb the nearest Buzzard which, after repeatedly taking evasive action, beat a hasty retreat and left the Lanner in full control of its hunting area.

Fish Eagle (149) One immature bird seen at Klaver Vlei, where it caught a fair sized fish, retiring to one of the willows on the bank to eat it.

—P.S. Lockhart, Somerset West.
March.

White Stork (78) When my husband and I were driving in the Graaff Reinet, Verwoerd Dam, Cradock, Grahamstown areas, between May 24 and June 2, we saw about 300 White Storks. There was a huge flock near the Graaff Reinet-Middelburg road; I estimated at least 200.—Mrs. E. Smuts, Rondebosch. 19.6.73

Schlegel's Chat (566) With reference to the comments on p.4 of Newsletter 104 about chats, I think there can be little doubt that the bird the Martins and Broekhuysens attributed to Schlegel's Chat was, in fact, a Tractrac Chat (571) which is like a very slightly smaller Familiar Chat (570) with an almost white rump. Incidentally, although the Karoo races of Karoo and Tractrac Chats are easily told apart, the Namib races are so alike that it is very difficult to distinguish them even in the hand.

—Dr J.M. Winterbottom, Cape Town. 14.6.73

Darter (52) On June 21 I was at Tamatie Vlei and noticed a Darter (52) holding what could have been either a large frog or a crab by one leg. I incline to the belief that it was a crab as the limb was so stiff. The bird was clearly at a loss to know how to deal with this large and hard object and at first dived for long periods, apparently in the hope of drowning it. Each time it surfaced, however, the prey, hanging by the one limb (claw?) seemed unharmed. The dives became shorter and more frequent and after each dive the bird shook the prey hard. This went on for quite 15 dives and then I thought I'd get a bit closer, as the bird was moving away all the time. When I had got close enough the prey had gone...Whether (assuming it was a CRAB) the Darter had

received a nip I don't know, but it repeatedly dipped its bill in the water and kept shaking its head. This story has no ending....

—Philip Tongue Cape Town 24.6.73

MEMBERS ARE URGED TO SEND IN REPORTS OF ANYTHING THAT THEY FEEL IS OF INTEREST. THE DEADLINE FOR THE SEPTEMBER ISSUE WILL BE ABOUT THE 15TH OF THAT MONTH.

CONSERVATION

An interesting development was foreshadowed at the recent AGM of the SAOS which took place at the University on Saturday May 19 at which Mr. C.C.H. Elliott spoke in favour of the Society being more active in conservation matters. Your acting Editor supported this view feeling as he does that we, as a nation, are lamentably short of a wide coverage of reserves for saving the habitat of those birds whose needs are in short supply...or will be if nothing is done (e.g. the Orange-breasted Sunbird for whom the recent fires about Kirstenbosch can have done nothing but harm).

Dr. Winterbottom agreed that habitat destruction was a major threat to bird life, though he inclined to the view that habitat preservation had a broader scope and as such was first and foremost the concern of the Wildlife Protection Society...which might be strengthened if it had the full support of the SAOS and the International Council for Bird Preservation (ICBP). Council was finally directed to take active steps to co-operate with the ICBP and present thoroughly motivated proposals to the Wildlife Society, with which the meeting agreed.

The immediate result of this decision has been the creation of a Conservation sub-Committee which has already met, though it is yet too early to report further on its progress.

The writer believes it is absolutely essential for birds in Southern Africa, that a powerful voice of expert opinion and advice should be created; one capable of making itself heard in the often sound-proof chambers of government, and of directing, influencing...even of forming public opinion in this vital matter. It is not irrelevant to this statement of belief that the New Zealand government agreed some years ago to take active part in, and make a contribution (if a small one!) to, the preservation of threatened species, in response to pressure from nature lovers, amateur naturalists and informed public opinion.

CAPE SHOVELLER (94) AND CAPE TEAL (98) The Senior Officer, Andries Venter Research Station, Private Bag 5014, Stellenbosch, writes as follows:

We, in the Department of Nature Conservation are at present engaged in a study of the movements and population dynamics of Cape Shoveller (*Anas smithii*). To this end we have released marked Shovellers at the Strandfontein Sewage Works in April and shall release more later.

Each bird has the usual N.U.B.R.A. ring and one of our numbered, blue nasal markers for easy identification. We make regular counts of Cape Shoveller numbers at Strandfontein. Already we have evidence of a high proportion of dispersal but little return on where they are going. The widest possible coverage is thus urgently needed. Therefore we should appreciate it if you would circularise the Bird Club's members and ringers at your earliest convenience, to keep a special look out for marked Cape Shovellers.

The blue nasal saddles are easily distinguishable in the field. Unfortunately the numbers have not proved easily readable unless at close range or with powerful binoculars.

The information we are looking for is: ⁺1. Number of marked Cape Shoveller seen. ⁺2. Sex if possible. ⁺3. Number of unmarked C. Shoveller also present. ⁺It will perhaps help if observers state if they censused Cape Shovellers specifically or if they simply recorded the number of marked birds seen during general bird observations. 4. Place. 5. Date. 6. Number(s) on nasal-marker(s). 7. Observer's name and address.

We should be glad if any of the above information can be sent as early as possible to us at the above address or by telephoning Stellenbosch 4303.

Cape Teal (*Anas capensis*) are being similarly studied using Green, Orange, Yellow or White nasal markers or Green or Orange rightwing tags. The same information on these would also be greatly appreciated.

HOLIDAY

The Aughrabies Falls National Park.

It has to be admitted that one waterfall is pretty much like another; one is happy to have seen it, but it doesn't take long to get a bit bored. At least this is how the writer feels about waterfalls.

As an excuse to make a journey though, there is much to be said for seeing almost any fall, and when it is surrounded by extremely interesting semi-arid country, as is Aughrabies, there is plenty to do and see after paying one's respects to the Orange River. The Park is a comfortable two days' drive from the Cape, via Vanrhynsdorp and Calvinia. From here the road, now tarred the whole way, crosses the scenically uninteresting Bushman Flats, where however there is a chance of spotting the Red Lark (479) which, says ROBERTS, is confined to patches of red Kalahari sandveld in that area, and joins the Carnarvon-Aughrabies road at Keimoes. There is quite good accommodation in hotels at Carnarvon (about 90 miles from Aughrabies) an hotel $2\frac{1}{2}$ miles from the Falls and a first-rate Caravan Park with plenty of hot water in the Park. The National Parks Board have a cafe at the Ranger's house, open until about 4.30 p.m. where cafe-type snacks may be obtained. The amenities at this place are being added to in the shape of a museum-cum-information centre. There is also ONE cottage that sleeps 4 and which may be hired for R7.00 a day. All amenities except food...

My wife and I were there at the end of May. There were three other caravans and even on the Sunday I doubt whether more than twenty cars came and went. The usual procedure seems to be for the drivers to take the vehicle right up to the rim of the river...a practice that I feel ought to be discouraged, since nothing dwarfs and belittles any landscape like a motor car...spend about half an hour walking up and down the rim of the gorge, and the to depart; this makes it very pleasant for the solitude-loving birdwatcher.

There is a good variety about the Caravan Park, including the Red-eyed Bulbul (544) which here replaces the Cape Bulbul (543), Dusky Sunbird (764), the inevitable White-eye (775), and many Pale-winged Starlings (744) that here replace the common Red-winged Starling (745) of the Western Cape. This is one of the places where one may see four of the five S. African sparrows, the Cape (786) House (784) Grey-headed (787) and occasionally the Great (785). On the second day large numbers of Cape Glossy Starlings (737) were present, though we saw none the day before. We did not see many water birds, only a Hamerkop (72), a few Black Storks (79) and what could have been a pair of Black Duck (95). Nor did we see many raptors, save for a Jackal Buzzard (152) and Rock Kestrels (123).

There were always a good number of Rock Martins (506) flying about in the gorge and we also noted White Throated Swallows (495) and Little (385) and Alpine Swifts (386). There are many small birds in the bush, all needing time to identify; there is a shallow river, crossed by the road to ARARAT...to the West of the camp...where we spent a couple of hours watching many of these small hard to name birds drinking. It is a worth-while spot, with never a dull moment though not sufficient cover to enable one to approach closely. The spectacular bird seen was the Swallow-tailed Bee-eater (411), a solitary bird as a rule, and one that this dry country suits.

Dr. J.H. Winterbottom has devoted some of his time to the Aughrabies and in KUDU Vol 13, 1970, pp 171-180 there is a list he compiled of the birds of the National Park area. This is available in the reprints series from the Percy Fitzpatrick and should form a part of the baggage of anyone thinking of going there. I did not know about this list when I was there, though the Ranger had a typewritten list by Dr. Winterbottom of about 100 birds seen on two visits which included such species as Ludwig's Bustard (218), two species of Sandgrouse, the Didric Cuckoo (352), the Rosy-faced Lovebird (330), Golden-tailed Woodpecker (447), a good assortment of Larks, and eight raptors including the Black-breasted Snake Eagle (146), Fish Eagle (149) and Lanner (114)

The Ranger and his wife when we were there were particularly kind and helpful, but as there appeared to be a good chance that they would have gone elsewhere soon afterwards, I say nothing more about them.

PROGRAMME FOR AUGUST AND SEPTEMBER

Please detach and keep as no further circular will be sent as we are trying to keep postage down.

OUTINGS

Sunday

August 5

NOOITGEDACHT FARM - Old Malmesbury Road.

Take N11 National Road to Malmesbury for 3 km past Durbanville-Vissershoek Bridge then turn left---there is no signpost at this junction. Proceed about 12 km to Philadelphia-Klipheuwel crossroads then take Kalbaskraal Road for further 6 km. Farm on the left marked "Nooitgedacht - J.F.W. Dempers". Go to farm over concrete bridge and park under trees on the right. Journey from Cape Town - 1 hour.

Sunday

August 19

BOTMA'S KLOOF - RIEBEECK KASTEEL

Take N11 into Malmesbury. Turn left and then right in town following road signs marked "Riebeeck West, Riebeeck Kasteel and Paarl". Continue for 6 km then take left road fork marked Riebeeck Kasteel. Drive up Botma's Kloof Pass and park at picnic spot on right hand side down far side of Pass. Journey from Cape Town - $1\frac{1}{2}$ hours.

CAMP

1, 2, 3,
September

There will be a camp at Cogman's Kloof - Montagu over this long weekend. Drive through the tunnel in Cogman's Kloof and about 300 yards beyond on the left is the municipal picnic/camping site. There is an ablution block.

For further details phone Stan Clarke 71-2745 or Alan Morris 72-4150, both evenings only.

EVENING MEETINGS : in Zoology Lecture Theatre at 8.15 p.m.

Friday

August 10

One of our younger members, Mr. B. Rowlands, was lucky enough to visit some of the more remote and little known islands in the Indian Ocean. There he was able to study the sea birds and take numerous photos.

He will be telling us all about his adventures in his talk, with slides, "Sea Birds of MAURITIUS and the CARGADOS CARAJOS Islands".

Friday

September 14

PLEASE NOTE CHANGE OF DATE

The Chairman of Council, Dr. Guy Currie, and one of our expert photographers will be making his debut at evening meetings with his slides under the title of "Illustrated Topics".

We look forward to seeing many members at all Club events.

WILL MEMBERS PLEASE NOTE THAT IN FUTURE THE ZOOLOGY BUILDING WILL HAVE TO BE LOCKED DURING CLUB MEETINGS---FOR SECURITY REASONS.

PLEASE COME EARLY TO AVOID BEING LOCKED OUT.