

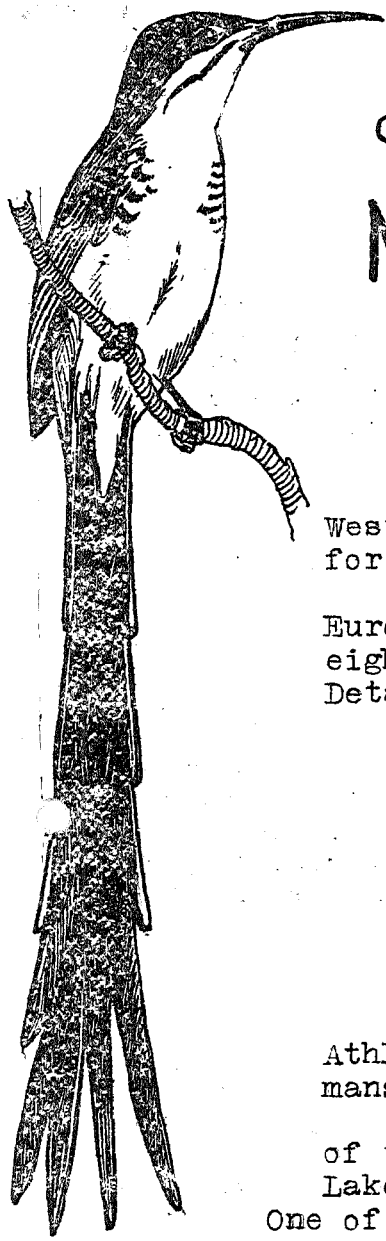
CAPE BIRD CLUB : KAAPSE VOËLWAARNEMERSKLUB

NEWSLETTER - NUUSBRIEF

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Mr. Jack MacLeod, the organiser of the Somerset West Ringing Group, sent me his Swallow Ringing Report for 1968/9. He writes:

The Group had a most successful season with 2757 European Swallows caught, of which 57 carried rings, eight of them ringed in Britain and 49 locally ringed. Details are as follows:

Birds ringed current season	26
1 year ago	14
2 years ago	4
3 years ago	2
4 years ago	1
5 years ago	1
6 years ago	1

The oldest bird was one ringed by Archie Brown at Athlone on 23 February 1963 and recaptured at Aldermans on 7 January, 1969.

We also had our first recoveries in Africa, North of the Limpopo, with two birds from the Western side of Lake Albert, in the N.E. Congo and two from Rhodesia.

One of our birds was also controlled in the Addo Elephant Park and a second found dead at Riversdale.

This year our Bredasdorp catches have been disappointing, owing to the severe drought and the consequent almost complete absence of "lake flies" which form the birds' staple diet. We caught only 241, most of them on 9 March, 1969, during a sudden cold snap when the birds sought shelter in the barns.

We had the company of our editor one evening at Aldermans, but caught only 46 birds as less than 1000 came in to roost that night.

A newcomer to our group is Geoff Wilson from Yorkshire who is fully trained in ringing and a most useful acquisition to our team.

BLACK-SHOULDERED KITE EATING ITS PREY.

Dr. (Mrs.) Rauch reports: I watched the bird which had caught a rodent, through field-glasses from the car. It severed the neck tissue and then pulled the head off which it swallowed whole. Then it opened the underside of the body, pulled out the heart and spat it out. It pulled out the gut most of which was swallowed, except for the small intestine which was also spat out. After that the bird swallowed the rest of the prey whole.

WOODFORD'S OWL AT NEWLANDS.

On 10 April 1969 Prof. Broekhuysen noticed an owl which had been killed by traffic on Union Avenue. Picking up the badly damaged bird, he saw to his great surprise that it was a Wood Owl (*Ciccaba woodfordii*). These Wood Owls are not common at all and it is very nice to know that they still occur in the forest of Newlands.

Several years ago he received a Wood Owl which had been injured by a car at Constantia; it had a broken leg. He nursed it back to health and after giving it a frog as "padkos", which it held in its beak, he let it go in his garden.

OLIVE WOODPECKERS AT JONKERSHOEK.

During the Club Outing to Assegaaibosch, on 20 April, Mrs. S. White and her sister had the luck of watching a pair of Olive Woodpeckers. They first noticed the male on the trunk of an oak, soon its mate appeared from behind the trunk. They worked their way along, probing into interesting places, and the male once almost disappeared into a hollow. They had reached the upper branches before they flew off.

RECOVERY OF RINGED BIRDS.

Prof. Broekhuysen reports: On 22 Dec. 1963, during a rather exciting outing to Schapen Island at Langebaan, a number of large young of the Sacred Ibis were ringed by members of the Cape Bird Club. One of these young has now been found dead at Saldanha on 5 April, 1969. This bird was, therefore, five years and 72 days old.

On 25 May last year a small group of Cape Bird Club members visited the Robben Island Hartlaub Gull breeding colony and ringed a number of young gulls. One of these was trapped on 9 April, 1969 in the Rondevlei Bird Sanctuary and released again. This gull was, therefore, recovered when about ten months old.

FLOCKING OF DUCKS.

On March 28, 1969, Mr. Siegfried counted 1700 Yellowbill Duck in one large raft at Kleinrivier Estuary at Hermanus. The birds were congregated about half a mile from the mouth of the river which was closed by the sea. This was one of the largest single aggregations of Yellowbill Duck that he has seen anywhere.

SACRED IBIS FEEDING ON SNAILS?

On 27 March along the road to Langebaan about a mile and a half from the Lagoon, Miss E.M. Darling noticed 40-50 Sacred Ibis. Nearly all that were clearly seen were pecking or eating. Fencing poles and some telegraph poles, as well as many bushes and reeds, were lavishly festooned with white snails. One wonders whether these are food for the Ibises.

On the road between Malmesbury and Hopefield she counted ten birds, all crushed and mutilated by vehicles.

PLUMAGE OF IMMATURE GREY-HEADED GULL.

On 15 May, while observing a flock of Hartlaub's and Black-backed Gulls at the Strand Beach, Mr. Lockhart noticed one gull which had an incomplete grey head. The grey colour was very pronounced, but did not extend to or down the neck as illustrated in the illustrations of the Grey-headed Gull in both Roberts' and Broekhuysen's books. The bill and legs were definitely black and apart from the grey at the top of the head the bird looked just the same as the rest of the Hartlaub's Gulls among which it was standing. Yet, from the description of Roberts it would seem that this bird was indeed a Grey-headed Gull. Comments on this observation are requested.

RUFF AT LANGEBAAN LAGOON.

During the Club Outing to Oesterwal on 22/3 February, Messrs. Clarke, Lockhart, Morgan and Schmidt saw one Ruff among other waters on the shore. According to "The Birds of the Langebaan Lagoon" (Liversidge, Broekhuysen, Thesen, Ostrich, Sept. 1958) Ruff was recorded there only twice and in both cases from the narshes.

CHAIRMAN'S REPORT 1968/9.

During the period under consideration, the Committee met six times. There was an 85 % attendance which, although still satisfactory, is nevertheless somewhat less than in previous years.

The following are some points which were considered by the Committee:

1. The Department of Nature Conservation approached the Cape Bird Club with the request to establish an Advisory Committee on which the Department could call to identify birds transported or in transit. Such an Advisory Committee was elected and the names of the members have been forwarded to the Department of Nature Conservation.
2. The Council of the South African Ornithological Society has made an appeal for contributions to the Ringing Fund. The Committee of the Cape Bird Club voted an amount of R50 which have been paid to the S.A.O.S.
3. Miss Troughton, who was the Club's representative on the South African National Section of the International Council for Bird Preservation resigned. The Vice Chairman, Mr. Rudolf Schmidt was elected as the new representative.
4. The Committee discussed a suggestion of a badge for members of the Cape Bird Club. It was agreed to investigate the costs of a badge, not for the members of the C.B.C., but generally for members of the South African Ornithological Society. As soon as the figures would be available the Council of the S.A.O.S. would be approached about the matter.

EXCURSIONS AND EVENING MEETINGS.

During the past Clubyear there were eight evening meetings. Six were those on the official program. Two were not on the pro-

gram. They were Mr. Read's talk and film on the Black Eagles nesting in the Plettenberg Bay Reserve, and Mr. Peter Steyn, who screened a large number of first class transparencies of Rhodesian birds.

The attendance to all these meetings was as usual very good.

There were a total of seven excursions. Although all of them were interesting, the excursion to Oosterwal at the Langebaan Lagoon was particularly a success. The people who went on that excursion saw Bar-tailed Godwits and Knots, two species of birds which are extremely rare in our country and consequently few birdwatchers have ever seen any.

These excursions were very well attended and their popularity is fastly becoming a problem as large numbers of people are always rather unwieldy especially when approaching birds.

MEMBERSHIP.

At the end of the last Clubyear the membership was 330. Now it stands at 365, which is a 10% increase. This is very promising and I should like to express the hope that this rate of increase will at least be maintained during the coming year.

SUB-COMMITTEES AND SCHEME ORGANISERS.

During the year which now lies behind us several ladies volunteered to make tea during the different evening meetings. Mrs. Broekhuysen acted as organiser and helped with the tea. To all these good ladies we are extremely grateful.

Mrs. Jane Sawkins was again responsible for arranging permits for the different excursions. She did this very efficiently and we thank her.

The Club will this time have no own Annual Dinner because this year the Annual General Meeting of the South African Ornithological Society will be held in Cape Town. The S.A.O.S. will have an annual dinner, which the Cape Bird Club is arranging for the Society. The person especially responsible here is Mrs. Mariette Broekhuysen and we thank her for all the trouble she has taken.

The Vice-Chairman, Mr. Rudolf Schmidt not only edited the Cape Bird Club's News Letter but took over from the Chairman occasionally and we also owe him many thanks. We also like to thank Mrs. Broekhuysen for typing the stencils for the News Letter.

Prof. Winterbottom again looked after the Field Card Scheme and Mr. Underhill looked after the Nest Record Cards.

Prof. Broekhuysen supervised ringing activities in the Club although most of the issuing of rings was done directly by the central Ringing Organisation housed in the Percy FitzPatrick Institute of African Ornithology. He also collected and filed information on the presence of migratory species at critical periods.

Mr. Alan Morris looked after the slide collection.

In ending this report I like to thank my fellow-committee members for what they did for the club and for their cooperation in running the affairs of the Club.

Further I wish to record the Club's appreciation and gratefulness to the Head of the Department of Zoology - Prof. John Day- for once more allowing the Club to use the lecture hall for all the Evening Meetings and for this Annual General Meeting.

I also like to thank the Director of the Percy FitzPatrick Institute - Prof. Jack Winterbottom - for allowing us to use the Library of the Institute for tea after the meetings.

G. J. Broekhuysen
CHAIRMAN.

CAPE BIRD CLUB NEST RECORD CARD PROJECT.

Nesting by 114 species was recorded during the year. A total of 2080 cards, including 20 colonial cards, were received. This represents an increase of 549 on the total of any previous year.

More than ten cards referred to the following species:

Dabchick	14	Cape Robin	17
Darter	11	Karoo Robin	13
Egyptian Goose	24	Fan-tailed Cisticola	18
Yellow-billed Duck	34	Cloud Cisticola	16
Cape Shoveller	105	Levaillant's Cisticola	15
Cape Dikkop	33	Karoo Prinia	37
Coot	419	Larger Striped Swallow	12
Stilt	24	Fiscal Shrike	33
Kittlitz's Sandplover	27	European Starling	37
Crowned Plover	72	White-eye	13
Blacksmith Plover	22	Orange-breasted Sunbird	26
Black-backed Gull	11	Sugarbird	16
Cape Turtle Dove	261	Masked Weaver	18
Laughing Dove	183	Cape Weaver	11
White-rumped Swift	16	Red Bishop	80
Cape Wagtail	15	Cape Sparrow	146
Tawny Pipit	37	Cape Canary	11

Nesting by the following species was recorded for the first time for several years:

Bank Cormorant (Mr. Lockhart)	Blue Crane (Mr. J. Martin)
Night Heron (Miss N. Williams)	Red-chested Cuckoo (Mr. R. Martin)
Little Bittern (Mr. N. Myburgh)	Burchell's Coucal (Mr. R. Martin)
Shelduck (Rev. D.M. Low)	Barn Owl (Mr. R.K. Schmidt)
Maccoa Duck (Mr. M. Waltner)	Thick-billed Lark (Prof. Winterbottom)
Hartlaub's Gull (Messrs. Schmidt & Morgan)	Mrs. E. Martin, Messrs. D. Day, J. MacLeod)
Cape Sedge Warbler (Mr. N. Myburgh)	

Most surprising, however is the fact that there are no cards in respect of the following species:

Hamerkop, Pochard, Secretary Bird, Black-shouldered Kite, Water Dikkop, Painted Snipe, Black Oyster-catcher, Red-eyed Turtle Dove, none of the Kingfishers, Nightjar, Pied Barbet, Little Swift, Dusky Flycatcher, Cape Batis, Rock Thrush, Familiar Chat, Bar-throated Apalis, Boubou Shrike, none of the Crows, House Sparrow. Surely nests of some of these were found?

The following members submitted nest record cards for 1968. Mr. G.J.J. Alberts 2, Mr. A.R. Brown 18, Prof. Broekhuysen 10, Mrs. Broekhuysen 2, Miss D. Day 6, Mr. A.H. Elliot 9, O. Fouche 9, Mr. W.T. Ferguson 5, Mr. D. Finlay 3, Mr. P. Frost 1, Mrs. M. Knipe 6, Mrs. S.L. Knipe 1, Mr. J.V. Lodder 2, Commander Lawder 2, Rev. D.M. Low 5, Mrs. Gwen Lipp 21, Mrs. M.J. Love 420, Mr. P.S. Lockhart 125, Mr. J. Macleod 7, Mr. John Martin 53, Mr. R. Martin 57

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Mrs. E. Martin 60, Mr. H.K. Morgan 2, Mr. N. Myburgh 33, Mr. John Moore 2, Mr. D. Pelteret 8, Mr. J.S. Pringle 16, Mr. A.N. Rowan 2, Mr. R.K. Schmidt 106, Mr. W.R. Siegfried 10, Mr. Peter Steyn 35, Mr. P. Tongue 2, Mr. A.J. Tree 12, G.D. Underhill 781, Neil van Zyl 124, Mr. E.M. van Zinderen Bakker 13, Mr. M. Waltner 43, Prof. J.M. Winterbottom 41, Mrs. M. Winterbottom 3, Miss Norah Williams 51.

I would like to express my sincere thanks to all these contributors to the project.

G.D. UNDERHILL.
ORGANISER.