

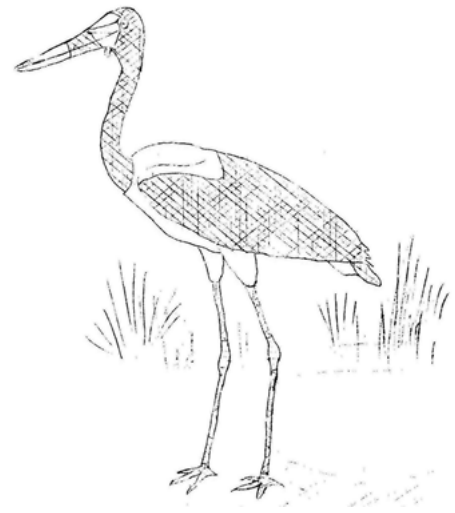
Rhodesian Ornithological Society

Bulletin No. 35

August 1961

1.

THE EFFECTS OF DROUGHT AT NGESI DAM, 1960



The water level at Ngesi Dam [Ngezi] was several feet lower than normal; the result of drought, not in 1960 but 1959. In consequence there had been little growth of reeds and other water plants and many areas which, as a rule afford good cover were in the early spring of 1960, were either very shallow and bare of aquatic vegetation, or else high and dry.

To White-backed Duck, which is normally present in all the bays and inlets of the dam, breeds regularly there. I have in past years usually had up to 8 broods under observation, the first appearing in early July. In 1960, the birds were present as usual, and paired off but did not breed; on one occasion only, I saw a small party which might have consisted of parents and fledged young.

The Purple Gallinule [African Purple Swamphen], several pairs of which bred on the dam in 1957, 1958 and 1959 disappeared altogether in 1960. The areas in which they normally breed were then high and dry. On the other hand, in normal seasons, waders are only seen occasionally at Ngesi usually an odd Wood Sandpiper. In 1960, however, they were comparatively common, and all the usual species were seen except the Marsh Sandpiper. This was the result of the exposure of areas of muddy foreshore not usually uncovered.

At other dams in the area, all species except waders left altogether, there being no vegetation anywhere near the edge of the remaining water.

A.B. Fletcher.

Whether the 1959-60 drought season is also responsible for the changes which Mrs. Ingle of Lalapanzi has noticed amongst the birds in her garden is anyone's guess. She writes:

I have been worried all the summer that certain birds have been missing from my garden. Through the years I have scattered grain — munga and crushed maize in front of the house, and up to this season, Paradise Whydahs [Long-tailed Paradise-whydah] have been daily visitors in the summer. I think I remember seeing one specimen at the commencement, but not since. Can this absence be due to destruction during crop ripening or for food, in the Reserves?

2.

I recently saw a male Melba Finch [Green-winged Pytilia] with his two wives in my paddock. The last time I saw one of these brilliantly coloured little creatures was two years ago, drinking from a bird bath. A pair of Red-headed Weavers built in a sapling tree-tobacco (*Nicotiniana glauca*) growing (self-sown) outside the sitting room window. They raised a family and departed, and the nest was taken over by a trio of Cut-throats [Cut-throat Finch], a species never before seen in my garden, or since in any part of the farm. Each night the male and one mate popped inside the nest, but wife No. 2 could never find the entrance; a number of vain tries, then flight — to reappear in the morning.

Scarlet-breasted Sunbird [Scarlet-chested Sunbird] — Mrs. M. Snell has sent some observations on a pair of Scarlet-breasted Sunbirds which has now nesting in her garden for three seasons.

A pair of Scarlet-breasted Sunbirds inhabits my garden, and I have had them under fairly close observation since December 1958, when they nested and raised a brood which flew on January 28th 1959. In the 1959-60 season they built their first nest in September, but it was damaged by a veld fire. They soon built again and raised a brood. In their latest season, I was able to keep track of them while they raised three broods, which is probably their normal habit. The first was in September

1960; of two chicks, one flew against my window and was killed, and the second, while we were actually watching the parents feed it, was killed by a Fiscal Shrike [Common Fiscal] on October 2nd. The parents, much distressed at the time, started to build a new nest a week later. This nest was in a msasa tree close to an upstairs window, so that I had a grandstand view of all proceedings for several weeks. The two chicks flew about November 20th and were observed in the neighbourhood for some weeks thereafter. I had assumed up to this time that the birds would raise only two broods, but on February 15th 1961, I heard the familiar high-pitched squeak of young sunbirds, and on going to look, found that the parents were indeed feeding a newly-fledged third brood. As late as March 16th, I watched all four sunbirds together feeding on purple *Salvia*, though the male parent did at one stage give chase to one of his own young. I suspect (March 31st) that they are still all roosting together in an Avocado Pear tree.

The male parent bird has such a marked individual personality that although he is not ringed, there is no reasonable doubt that he is the same bird I was watching in 1958 and possibly in 1957.

3.

There is no proof of course, that he has had the same hen throughout, as he is extremely aggressive about his territory, the young birds always eventually disappear. He himself has certain favourite perches, which he uses and in various ways he impresses himself as a 'character'.

Albino Starling (from R.K. Hart, Kalabo, Barotseland)

My son has collected a specimen of an albino starling and made a study skin of it. The bird is completely white, except for the beak and legs, and a black feather in each wing.

I saw a flock from which the bird was shot and our joint identification is the Lesser Blue-eared Glossy Starling [Miombo Blue-eared Starling], which seems to be borne out by the size of the specimen. Unfortunately we had no observations of the behaviour of the rest of the flock towards the albino bird.

Alpine Swift (from C. Vernon, Bulawayo)

My notes have records of two records of this species – one from Kachalota, Northern Rhodesia, and the other from Macheke. The latter results from a visit to Bopoma, south Macheke, following a reference of Capt. Priest's in his *Birds of Southern Rhodesia* to *Apus affinus* at that farm.

At Kachalota I saw one *Apus melba*, and at Bopoma about six. There was a striking difference in colouring between these birds. The single bird was dark brown as illustrated by *Roberts*, but the Bopoma birds were grey-brown above (very much paler), and not the usual swift-like colouring. Most interesting was their tremendous size and speed, and peculiar large wings.

Ground Hornbill

Following from his account of possible nesting of this species [Southern Ground-hornbill] in open nests of sticks, in *Bulletin* No. 34, Mr. G.W. Parnell writes;

I have some more information. The nests were on top of 'Knobby thorns' (? *Acacia nigrescens* – editor) and are used year after year, the clutch of eggs being two. The nests are never in close proximity, with only one pair of birds in the vicinity of each nest. This seems to dispose of the communal nesting idea, at least as the Plumtree area is concerned.

Mr. Vernon writes that there are no published records of Ground Hornbills nesting in the tops of thorn trees, and all the Nest Record Cards refer to holes in trees.

He goes on "I doubt the communal nesting idea, though with

4.

flocking or gregarious species, odd birds are known to assist the parents in feeding the young.

A further account of the nesting of the Ground Hornbill comes from N. Jacobsen. "I discovered the nest of a Ground Hornbill near Sinoia, in a hole in a small kopjie. The nest had hardly any lining except for a little grass and leaves, and contained one egg. I visited it as frequently as possible and after about a week the young hornbill hatched. Whenever I visited the nest, I found about 4 or 5 adults congregated there; this is, I think, due to the fact that Ground Hornbills usually travel in small groups and when one flies away the others follow, so that when a parent bird flies off to feed its young, the others follow and congregate at the nest as a result."

Dusky Lark (Notes from A.B. Fletcher in Francistown)

This species was first noticed on April 18th 1961, and I am satisfied that it was not here previously, as I could not have failed to see it. From that time it has been seen daily, in singles, pairs and small parties, and appearing to have a fondness for roads, which here are all of gravel. It is usually seen sitting either in or alongside the roadway, but has been observed to perch in trees, and even on telephone lines, and to come right into the edges of the village. I have not yet observed the habit of flicking its wings, which is mentioned in *Bulletin* No. 32.

I never met this species at all during the 14 years I lived in the Gatooma District [Kadoma].

In a later letter, Mr. Fletcher adds, "They all left during the first week of June, the last two being seen on the 7th. Later in the month I visited the museum in Bulawayo: from the dates on the skins there, it appears that they probably move north from here."

Small goshawks and sparrowhawks; C. Vernon contributes the following

I feel that there is much confusion in the separation and identification of these birds, therefore have drawn up a few notes.

The Museum suggests that, according to the skins in the collection

- (a) The Ovambo Sparrowhawk is uncommon
- (b) The Little Banded Goshawk [Shikra] is commoner than the Gabar Goshawk

5.

- (c) The Little Banded Goshawk is twice as common as the Little Sparrowhawk.

The Nest Record Cards show a different picture - the Ovambo Sparrowhawk is commoner, the Gabar more frequent than the Little Banded Goshawk, and the Little Sparrowhawk almost as common. Thus I feel (I could be wrong here) that:

- (i) The Ovambo Sparrowhawk is being recorded instead of the Gabar.
- (ii) The Little Banded Goshawk is being recorded as the Gabar, and maybe
- (iii) The Little Banded Goshawk is being recorded as the Little Sparrowhawk.

Mechow's Chanting Goshawk. N. Jacobsen sends an account of this bird attempting to catch a squirrel

Last year when I was working in Northern Rhodesia I saw a Chanting Goshawk [Dark Chanting-goshawk] make repeated attempts to catch a sun squirrel which was clinging to the side of a large *Brachystegia* tree. Every time the goshawk made a try, the squirrel would scamper round the other

side of the tree and the hawk would miss it. After about four attempts the goshawk gave up and flew away. I have never before seen a goshawk make an attempt at catching as large a rodent as the sun squirrel, which is quite capable of looking after itself. Could other members please say if they have seen similar scenes?

Another incident was in 1959, with the Prince Edward Natural History Club near Mermaid's Pool. I saw a Mechow's Chanting Goshawk eating a snake. When I approached, it flew off with the snake dangling from its claws. I chased it and it eventually left the snake in a tree. When I retrieved the snake I was surprised to see that it was a Hissing Sand Snake about 3½ feet in length.

Pied Barbet

C. Vernon writes that in February this year he saw an Acacia Pied Barbet emerging from a Masked Weaver's [Southern Masked-weaver] nest. The weavers were about but seemed to take no notice. On examination, the nest was found to contain two fresh, brown-spotted, green eggs (i.e. weaver's, not barbet's eggs). Mr. Vernon goes on, "The question is, what was the barbet doing in there? Feeding? On what? Or examining it just because it was a hole?"

Western Violet-backed Sunbird

Mrs. Snell reports a pair of these lovely birds in thickish *Brachystegia* about 8 miles north of Marandellas. "This was my first view of these birds; they were on the fringes of a bird-party, and seemed very much at home,

6.

so that I am hoping to find them nesting at the spot. I watched them feeding for some time, assuming some acrobatic postures, preening their feathers, and so on. Altogether a most satisfying experience.

The female, as well as the gorgeous male, is noticeable and distinct from the various other female sunbirds in the area by reason of the short beak and very pale colour of the underparts.

Goliath Heron

Following on the note on this species in *Bulletin* No. 34, Mr. Vernon informs me that he has had eleven cards for this bird from Mr. Graham Child, from Kariba. They are for the following months: February, April, May, June, July, August and September.

Clearly the peak period for breeding, at least as far as Kariba is concerned, is during the winter.

Lesser Grey Shrike (Note from Francistown by A.B. Fletcher.)

This species was first seen by me on February 27th, 1961, and again I am satisfied that I could not have missed it if it had been here previously.

In numbers it has been about equal to the Red-backed Shrike; possibly even commoner. During March, I used to see an average of 2 to 5 individuals during my daily drives to and from work; about 7½ miles each way. They were usually perched on telephone or fence wires, or on the tops of bushes, and were to be seen right into the outskirts of the village. The last was seen on April 10th.

I never met this species in Rhodesia, but twice heard of it having been seen on the golf course at Gatooma.

Penduline Tit

In the March 1961 issue of the *Ostrich*, Miss Courtenay-Latimer mentions Penduline Tits [Cape Penduline-tit] roosting in an old Masked Weaver's nest in South-West Africa [Namibia], and ends up "This appears to be the first record of Penduline Tits using a weaver's nest for roosting purposes." Mrs. Diana Wheeler writes that at Calgary Farm 14 miles north of Salisbury, on January 19, she was fascinated to see a party of Grey Penduline-tits going to roost in an old Golden Weaver's nest. This observation extends the habit to a second species of penduline-tit (*Anthoscopus caroli*).

Kurrichane Buttonquail

In *Bulletin* No. 33, Mr. Parnell commented on the apparent long breeding season of these birds. Mr. Vernon writes that the Nest Record Cards show that the main nesting season is from February to May, with a single record for the months September to January.

7.

Lesser Gallinule (*Porphyrio allen*) in Bechuanaland

Mr. Fletcher writes "This species [Allen's Gallinule], which I have not met in Southern Rhodesia, has been found breeding on a dam on Bosoli Ranch about 20 miles north of Francistown. At least three pairs are present on the dam which covers about 15 acres. They are, however, very secretive.

They were first recognised on March 26th, and on that date an adult was observed feeding a chick in down, apparently about 10 days old. On April 30th two fully feathered juveniles were seen at the same spot, after a wait of about an hour.

The adults occasionally show themselves outside the reed beds and may sometimes be observed climbing about among the tops of the reeds near the edge. They have however, on two occasions, approached me in the open to within about 15 yards, when I have been sitting in partial cover waiting for them. At these times they have uttered loud and raucous croaks, obviously trying to make me move and show myself. They probably had chicks close at hand. Both African [Common Moorhen] and Lesser Moorhens breed in the same reedbed."

RINGING RECOVERIES

The following rings have been recently recovered.

No. 54-10100 - Layard's Bulbul (Dark-capped Bulbul). Ringed at Hillside, Bulawayo by B. Donnelly on 12 February 1959. Picked up dead at stand 49, Marvic Township, about a mile away on 12th June 1961.

C645 - Hottentot Teal. Ringed at Lake Dow by the National Museum Expedition on 26 January 1959. Recovered 120 miles northwest at Maun on 12 February 1959.

In addition, a Russian ring, 3431B Moska, has been taken from a White Stork found dead on the Gatooma-Hartley road and efforts are being made to find out where this bird was ringed.

THE NEST RECORD CARD SCHEME

The scheme manages to survive, thanks to the stout efforts of a few members; but there is still very little support from the majority and emphasis must be placed on the importance of supporting this scheme of scientific interest.

8.

Most of our 230+ members must surely find *some* nests each year, but less than 10% contribute cards. So it seems as if much useful information is being hoarded in notebooks, or not being recorded at all. The British Trust for Ornithology, while having only 180 breeding species to our 420, collects as many cards in a year as we have in the entire collection. (They do of course, have many more contributors.)

A collection of Nest Record Cards enables the breeding season, clutch size and incubation and fledging periods to be calculated. Thus the value of a card increases if a series of observations are made at one nest.

What should be recorded? Every nest with eggs or young, even if only visited once. The minimum data required are the date, the clutch size, locality, and most important, the name of the species of bird occupying the nest. But descriptions of the nest, the nest site, habitat, egg colours and sizes, chick ages and development are also important, and should be recorded as often as possible. And it must be stressed that records of our commoner species are especially welcome.

So come on, dig out those old records and send them in with your latest ones to:

C.J. Vernon Esq.,
P.O. Box 562
Bulawayo.

MINUTES OF THE ELEVENTH ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING OF MEMBERS OF THE
RHODESIAN ORNITHOLOGICAL SOCIETY HELD AT THE QUEEN VICTORIA MUSEUM,
CORNER OF JAMESON AVENUE AND ROTTEN ROW, SALISBURY, ON SATURDAY
25TH FEBRUARY 1961, AT 4:30 P.M.

Present were Mr. and Mrs. G. Attwell, Mr. R.K. Brooke, Miss G.E. Bourlay, Mr. & Mrs. N.A. Campbell, Mr. R. Day, Mr. B. Eastwood, Mr. C. Grabandt, Mr. R.F. Griffiths (Hon. Treasurer), R.C. Knight (Hon. Secretary), Mr. D.H. Linton, Mr. H.M. Miles, Mr. C.S. Mitchell, Mr. J.R. Peters, Mr. D.C.H. Plowes, Mr. P. Roberts,

9.

R.C. Smith, Mrs. M.L. Snell and Miss J. Webber.

Apologies were received from Mrs. L.B. Ball, Mr. C.W. Benson, Captain L A. Bourlay, M.B.E., Mr. A.A.F.G. Farmar, Dr. R.M. Harwin, Mr. M.P.S. Irwin, Mrs. R.C. Knight, Miss R. McDowell, Mrs. Mitchell, Mr. J.M. Paterson, Mr. R.W. Rankine, Miss I. Rorke, Captain R.H.R. Stevenson, Sir Richard Sullivan, Mr. J.M.E. Took, Mr. C. Vernon, and Mrs. Wheeler.

In the absence of the President, Captain R.A. Bourlay, and the Vice president, Mr. M.P.S. Irwin, Mr. C.S. Mitchell took the chair and welcomed the members to the meeting.

1. MINUTES

The Minutes of the Tenth Annual General Meeting of members, held in Salisbury on 7th May 1960, having been circulated, were taken as read and CONFIRMED.

2. MATTERS ARISING OUT OF THE MINUTES

(a) Micofilming of Nest Record Cards

The Hon. Secretary stated that this matter had been examined and it had been hoped that, following the very generous offer by the Atlantica Foundation to bear the cost of microfilming, it would be possible for all cards, amounting to some 10,000 to be microfilmed before they were sent to the Percy FitzPatrick Institute of African Ornithology in Cape Town. To date it had not been possible to arrange this, although it was hoped to do it before the cards were sent to Cape Town in mid-March.

(b) Check List of the Birds of Southern Rhodesia

The Hon Secretary reported that sales of the *Check List* were slow but steady, and that arrangements were in hand for a leaflet advertising the *Check List* to be inserted in all copies of *Roberts* sold in Rhodesia.

(c) Wild Life Conservation Act, 1960.

Mr. Knight said that he had not yet received the permit from the Department of Wild Life Conservation, but that he hoped that it would arrive within the next few days when he would be able to arrange the issue of permits to members. He emphasised that the permit would not allow the collection of eggs or specimens, but only the photographing, examination and inspection of birds and their nests.

[pp. 10 & 11 - accounts, omitted]

12.

3. REPORT OF THE PRESIDENT

The chairman read the President's report for the year ended 31st December 1960, which was unanimously adopted, the meeting expressing its warm appreciation of the work of the President during the past year.

4. HON. TREASURER'S REPORT

The Hon. Treasurer, Mr. R.J. Griffiths, presented his Report and the Accounts for the year ended 31st December 1960, copies of the Accounts being circulated and unanimously adopted. The Meeting expressed its sincere thanks to Mr. Griffiths for undertaking the work of Hon. Treasurer following the resignation of Mr. A.B. Fletcher. The Meeting also expressed its deep appreciation of the work of Mr. Fletcher during his period of office as Hon. Treasurer.

5. REPORT OF THE HON NEST RECORD ORGANISER

Mr. H.M. Miles presented his report, which was adopted with acclamation. It was announced that Mr. Miles had resigned his office as Nest Record Organiser. This news was received with great regret, and the meeting expressed its very warm thanks to Mr. Miles for his work over the past nine years, which was responsible for the great success of the Nest Record Scheme.

6. REPORT OF THE HON EDITOR

The Report of the Hon. Editor (Dr. R.M. Harwin) was read by the Chairman and received with interest. The view expressed by a member that the *Bulletin* was the most vital force in the life of the Society was acclaimed and the members present expressed their appreciation of the work of the Hon. Editor.

7. REPORT OF THE HON MIGRATION RECORD ORGANISER

Mrs. Snell, the Hon. Migration Record Organiser, stated in her report that she had only recently assumed the post and was still in the process of working out a system of recording. She suggested, however, that a list of migrants should be circulated to all members, together with a form for completion by members showing migrants seen. Mr. R.C. Smith thought it might be possible to have a suitable form printed. He undertook to arrange this when it was known what was required.

13.

The Chairman thanked Mr. Smith for his generous offer and the matter was left in the hands of the Committee, while Mrs. Snell and Mr. Brooke collaborate in the preparation of a list of migrants.

8. REPORTS FROM SUB-BRANCHES

In the absence of a representative from Selukwe sub-branch, and as the Matabeleland sub-branch was defunct, only Mr. R.K. Brooke (Mashonaland sub-Branch) reported. Mr. Brooke stated that the sub-branch had enjoyed a successful and active year, and was maintaining its numbers well. His report was adopted.

9. ELECTION OF OFFICERS

As Captain R.A. Bourlay had declined to accept office as President for a further year, the Chairman called for nominations for President. After considerable discussion, it became evident that no member was available to accept office, and it was agreed that the election of a President, Vice-President and two elected members of the committee be proceeded with at a later stage of the meeting.

The retiring Hon. Secretary, (Mr. R.C. Knight), Hon. Treasurer (Mr. R.F. Griffiths), Hon. Editor (Dr. R.M. Harwin) and Hon. Ringing Organiser (Mr. J.M. Paterson) were all unanimously re-elected with acclaim. Mr. C. Vernon was elected as Hon. Nest Record Organiser, vice Mr. H.M. Miles, retired.

10. OTHER BUSINESS

Mr. R.C. Knight moved that the constitution be amended to reduce the quorum for a committee meeting from six members to four. Mr. Knight stated that during the past two years considerable difficulty had been experienced in obtaining a quorum of six for committee meetings, due to, largely, the number of members resident outside Salisbury. He pointed out that this made the carrying on of the Society's business difficult and went on to give examples of the difficulties. It was recognised that members of the committee who, though they could not attend meetings, nevertheless contributed largely to the work of the committee.

Mr. R.K. Brooke seconded the motion and, after considerable discussion it was unanimously resolved that "Subject to the approval of the council of the South African Ornithological Society

14.

Article 8(b) of the Constitution be and is hereby amended by the deletion of the word "six" and the substitution therefor of the word "four" and by the addition of the words "of whom the Hon. Secretary must be one" at the end of the Article".

11. DATE AND VENUE OF THE NEXT ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

It was agreed that the Twelfth Annual General Meeting of members be held before the end of February 1962 at a venue to be decided by the Committee.

The meeting then adjourned at 6 p.m., to resume again at 8.15 p.m.

The meeting resumed at 8.15 p.m. with Mr. Mitchell in the Chair.

The chairman called again for nominations for President and Mr. J.M.E. Took was unanimously elected.

Mr. G. Attwell was elected as Vice-President, and Captain R.A. Bourlay and Mr. R.C. Smith were elected to the committee in place of Mr. C.W. Benson and Mr. J. Paterson, who retired in accordance with Article 8 of the Constitution, and were not eligible for re-election.

The meeting closed at 8.30 p.m. with a hearty vote of thanks to the Chairman.

NOTE: The Committee for 1961 therefore is:

President & Chairman:	Mr. J.M.E. Took
Vice President & Deputy Chairman:	Mr. G. Attwell
Hon. Secretary:	Mr. R.C. Knight
Hon. Treasurer:	Mr. R.F. Griffiths, A.C.A.
Hon. Editor:	Dr. R.M. Harwin
Hon. Ringing Organiser:	Mr. J.M. Paterson
Hon. Nest Record Organiser:	Mr. C. Vernon
Elected members	Mrs. L.B. Ball
	Mr. R. Boulton
	Capt. R.A. Bourlay, M.B.E.
	Mr. R.K. Brooke
	Mr. R.C. Smith

Mr. R.H.N. Smithers, O.B.E.

RHODESIAN ORNITHOLOGICAL SOCIETY
PRESIDENT'S ANNUAL REPORT FOR THE YEAR 1960

The year under review has not been marked by any exceptional event. There is a small increase in the total membership over the previous year. The total number of members at the end of the year was 255, which shows an increase of 12. The increase in numbers has been confined almost entirely to the Mashonaland Branch, which is at present the Society's only really active Branch. The Selukwe Branch has been dependent upon the enthusiasm of Captain Stevenson, its Chairman, and owing to his ill health it has not been very active during the year. We wish him an early return to normal health, which we hope will enable him to revive the Selukwe Branch. The Matabeleland Branch, which was only a few years ago the Society's largest and most active Branch, has been more or less moribund during the year. This has resulted in a number of resignations. Your committee has considered and endeavoured to implement suggestion which may lead to its revival, but has not been successful. I hope the incoming committee will keep this particular task in mind.

During November Mrs. Mackie Niven, the President of the South African Ornithological Society, visited Salisbury. Despite the short notice your Committee was able to arrange for her to meet a number of the Society's members.

Earlier in year Dr. Winterbottom, Hon. Secretary of the African Ornithological Society, visited Salisbury, when he was able to meet members at a cocktail party.

During the year your Executive Committee met on three occasions, and in addition to attending to routine affairs of the society, it:

1. Continued the discussions with the Department of Wild Life Conservation on the matter of the issue of permits to members of the Society to enable ringing and nest recording activities to continue.

16.

2. Attended a meeting with the Director of the Department of Wild Life Conservation, who requested the opinion of the Society in regard to the policy to be followed in the issue of permits for the trapping of indigenous birds for commercial purposes.

3. At the request of the Greendale Town Management Board, it provided advice on the development of a bird sanctuary [Greengrove] within its area. The site was visited by members of the Committee and recommendations were submitted.

The Southern Carmine Bee-eater Colony on the Umfuli River continued to enjoy the protection provided by the joint efforts of the Natural Resources Board and the Beatrice and Salisbury South Intensive Conservation Committee.

The ROS *Bulletin* continues to serve the important function of providing members, particularly those in the more remote areas, with items of interest and information. Our thanks are due to Dr. Harwin for his work as editor.

The Nest Record Card Scheme continued to receive a gratifying measure of support from members. The Hon. Organizer Mr. Miles, will report on this section of the Society in more detail. With the establishment of The Percy Fitzpatrick Institute of Ornithology in Cape Town, the ROS has requested

that all completed cards at present held by the ROS should be housed in the Institute. While agreeing that this is a logical arrangement, the Committee considered that though these records would be readily available, should they be required in Salisbury for research work, there may on occasions be delays in the despatch of cards, and for this reason the possibility of micro-filming the cards was considered. Expense was the chief obstacle, and having obtained an approximate estimate of the cards, which, though at a very reduced rate, the Society would not have had the necessary funds to meet. At this stage Mr. Boulton of the Atlantica Foundation offered to have the micro-filming done at the expense of the Foundation. This generous offer is much appreciated.

Though not failing strictly within the year, I feel obliged to record, with much regret, that Mr. Miles has resigned as Nest Record Card Organiser with effect from 1st January. Mr. Miles has done this work for some nine years and it is undoubtedly due to his willingness and enthusiasm that we can claim such an impressive set of records. The Society owes him its lasting gratitude.

17.

Mr. C. Vernon has volunteered to take over from Mr. Miles.

There does not appear to be any increase in ringing activities within the society, any work in this direction being confined to the same relatively few members, working under the guidance of the Ringing Organiser Mr. Paterson.

The work of organising Migration accords has been taken over from Mr. R.K. Brooke by Mrs. M.L. Snell at the request of the former, owing to his having to devote a considerable amount of his time to other activities of the Society. Our thanks are due to Mrs. Snell for accepting this task.

The finances of the Society continue to be maintained in a satisfactory state even to the extent of making a donation of 25 guineas to the SAOS publications fund. It is with regret that I have to record the resignation of Mr. A.B. Fletcher, who as Hon. Treasurer for the last six years has been very largely responsible for the happy state of the Society's finances. I am sure all members will join me in wishing him all the best for the future.

Our thanks are due to Mr. R.F. Griffiths, A.C.A., for taking on the work of Hon. Treasurer.

During the year exhibits displaying the Society's activities were arranged at Gatooma, thanks to the efforts of Mr. and Mrs. Attwell, and at the Salisbury Agricultural Show. The success of the latter was very largely due to the generosity of Mrs. Wheeler who presented the Society with a most appropriate and attractive backdrop, which she commissioned an artist to paint. The assistance of members who attended the stand during the show was very much appreciated.

I think members will agree, on taking into account the foregoing items and the reports of the persons responsible for the various branches of the Society's activities that the Society has, with the exception of Matabeleland, maintained a very satisfactory level of activity. I would like to thank all those who have given of their time to further the Society's interests.

I regret that I will not be present at the Annual General Meeting and tender my apologies, particularly as this will be the second year that I have not been able to attend this important function.

18.

As I will not be standing for re-election I would like to wish the incoming President and Committee every success for the coming year.

Report of the Hon. Treasurer for the year 1960

You have heard tributes to my predecessor as Treasurer Mr. Fletcher, and I can confirm how carefully and assiduously he carried out the job for a number of years, by the records he handed over to me in perfect order.

I report that the membership of the Society increased during the year, but that the financial strength of the Society declined a little, as expenditure for the year exceeded income.

STATE OF THE SOCIETY AT 31.12.60.

On this date, membership was as under –

Life members	4
Ordinary members	211
Junior members	33
Institutional members	7
	<u>255</u>

In addition there were 22 Family members. This shows a net increase of 12, plus 3 Family members over the previous year.

During 1960, 37 new members joined the Society, comprising 28 Ordinary and 9 junior members. There were also 5 new Family members. We welcome one new Life member who was formerly an ordinary member; Mr. R.K. Brooke.

There have been 11 resignations during the year and 14 members have been struck off strength by the SAOS, having failed to pay their subscriptions for two years. Also, we have lost 2 Family members.

At the close of 1960, 22 subscriptions for that year were still outstanding, some of which have subsequently been paid.

BOOK FUND

This fund now includes also the purchase and sales of the Addendum to the *Check List*, and the balance in the fund increased a little during the year.

		19.	
Balance in hand 1.1.60	89. 8. 9.	purchase of 125 copies of Addendum	10.10. 0.
Sales and Profit on Check List	16.16. 0.	balance in hand 31.12.60	96.17. 9.
Sales of Addendum	<u>1. 3. 0.</u>		
	<u>£107. 7. 9.</u>		<u>£101. 7. 9</u>

RECEIPTS AND PAYMENTS ACCOUNT

At the close of 1960, the Society's resources were as follows:

Building Society Savings Account	124.18. 3.
Cash at Bank	<u>3.19. 3.</u>
Cash on hand	3.
	<u>£128.17. 09.</u>

Of this sum, £96.17.9 is earmarked for the Book Fund, leaving the balance of £32 at the general disposal of the Society.

The total balance in hand at the end of 1960 is £34.13.3 less than that the end of 1959, on account of the expenditure as shown by the account. Certain of these expenses will not recur in future years, so there is no need for concern that there will be a similar deficit in future.

REPORT OF THE HON EDITOR OF THE RHODESIAN ORNITHOLOGICAL SOCIETY'S BULLETIN FOR THE YEAR 1960

A correspondent, in a recent letter to me, expressed the opinion that it was a pity that the bulletin did not receive enough support to be produced more often.

I am afraid that this member must have an exaggerated opinion of my capabilities as an editor; I find one issue every three months about as much as I can cope with. Nevertheless, the letter gave me much pleasure, as I see that it is appreciated by at least some of the Society's members.

At least, if it was not possible to publish the bulletin more often, four issues were again produced at fairly regular intervals during the year, and as long as I remain editor, I shall try to maintain this frequency, realising at the same time that if it could be produced more often, so much the better.

20.

Regarding the material that has appeared in the *Bulletin*, I feel that it has received too little support from members in the form of notes and experiences, so that notices and articles such as that by Mr. Knight on the recent Wild Life Conservation Act, important as they are, have appeared to predominate. Once again, I appeal to members to submit accounts of their birdwatching experiences which are always welcome. At the same time I must again thank those old stalwarts whose contributions have kept the bulletin going since I took over the editorship in 1954.

SAOS NEST RECORD SCHEME IN SOUTHERN RHODESIA 1.7.60 - 21.12.60

The intake of Nest Record Cards for the above period was 643, making the total cards received in 1960 1313. Since the start of the scheme in S. Rhodesia the totals received by years has been as follows:

(1)	1957	1806	(6)	1959	978
(2)	1958	1612	(7)	1954	921
(3)	1955	1486	(8)	1953	530
(4)	1960	1313	(9)	1952	510
(5)	1956	1093			

Grand Total 10,279 cards.

During the last few months of 1960, R.K. Brooke and C.J. Vernon went through the collection to extract from the cards for each species, data as to its breeding month and its clutch, whilst I worked out some egg measurements given on the cards, averaging those with a hundred or more.

This information from the cards, when published, will show up to the end of June 1960, our data in statistical form. The Society is indebted to those members who found time to send in cards. There are still, however, too many gaps in the information coming forward, especially for those species which do not breed on the highveld.

During the nine years I have acted as organiser, many individual members have made outstanding records available through the Scheme.

21.

If I may mention the names of three members who stand out for the number of cards they have sent in, and it is a remarkable effort when it is seen that their combined total of cards comes to nearly 2500, they are C.K. Cooke and Peter Cooke, and C.J. Vernon, who wrote up all their own cards; the three Thomsen brothers also sent in numerous records mainly from Plumtree School. In addition mention must be made of R.K. Brooke, who has contributed to the scheme since its inception, and we are indebted to him for extracting from our cards some of the incubation and fledging periods of our birds, which have been published in the *Ostrich*.

Members' contributions of cards for the period are listed below; where a figure is shown in brackets it is the total number of cards they have sent in.

C.J. Vernon 90 (750), G. Child 86 (105), C.K. and Peter Cooke 82 (957), Thomson brothers 73 (771), Plumtree School museum 44 (187), R. Jeffrey jnr. 36, A. Williams 35 (178), Dr. A.W. Wragg 28 (381), B. Byrom 27 (175), C. Bartlett jnr. 26, J. Douglas 24, R.K. Brooke 12 (346), I. Cannell 10 (306), J. Pillans jnr. 10, R. Hyslop 8 (108), Falcon College Ornithological Society 8, G.K. Donald 7, N. Holmes 7, Mrs. G. Attwell 5, R. Rankine 4, H. Meyer 3 (129), B. Donnelly 3, M.P.S. Irwin, D. Wheeler, Miss G. Bourlay, C.S. Mitchell and C.W. Benson.

The Editor would welcome notes and other contributions to the *Bulletin*. They should be sent to:

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