Ornithological Observations

An electronic journal published by BirdLife South Africa and the Animal Demography Unit at the University of Cape Town

Ornithological Observations accepts papers containing faunistic information about birds. This includes descriptions of distribution, behaviour, breeding, foraging, food, movement, measurements, habitat and plumage. It will also consider for publication a variety of other interesting or relevant ornithological material: reports of projects and conferences, annotated checklists for a site or region, specialist bibliographies, and any other interesting or relevant material.

Editor: Arnold van der Westhuizen

DISABLED DIKKOP (THICK-KNEE)

Sylvia Ledgard

Recommended citation format:
Ledgard S 2012. Disabled Dikkop (Thick-knee). Ornithological Observations, Vol 3: 49

URL: http://oo.adu.org.za/content.php?id=42

Published online: 19 July 2012

- ISSN 2219-0341 -

DISABLED DIKKOP (THICK-KNEE)

*Sylvia Ledgard**

* Corresponding author: ledgard@telkomsa.net

The Spotted Thick-knee *Burhinus capensis* in this observation has taken up residence in the grounds of a village complex in Edgemead some time in 2011. As is to be expected of nocturnal birds, it moves about at night and keeps a low profile during the day, but is regularly seen by the villagers and gardeners. Its cryptic colouring is good camouflage and it often takes the keen eyes of a birder to pick it up.

The point of note is that it has no feet. Both feet are gone and it gets around by hopping on the two stumps. At rest, it crouches on the ankles with tarsi sticking up in the air on both sides of the body. There is no obvious wounding of the legs but there was some netting snagged around the flank, as can be seen in the picture. Since this picture was taken, the bird was cornered and the netting removed. None the worse, it seems to have adjusted to its handicap and is making a living getting around the garden. It has been seen to fly but does so reluctantly.

- oo0oo -