

# Ornithological Observations



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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**

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## **SCRUBBING MY BACK – DOUBLE-BANDED SANDGROUSE *PTEROCLES BICINCTUS* DUST-BATHING**

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## SCRUBBING MY BACK – DOUBLE-BANDED SANDGROUSE *PTEROCLES BICINCTUS* DUST- BATHING

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Birds "bath" in the dust to help them clean their feathers and remove ectoparasites and feather lice (Maclean 1990; Clayton *et al* 2010). According to Maclean it is especially observed in ground living birds.

Normally the birds are in an upright position shaking their plumage and wings vigorously to let in the dust between the feathers. They may also turn on their sides to get the plumage dusted properly.

I had been driving in Africa on Foot in the Klaserie Game Reserve on Thursday 13 September 2012. Just before dark I came across a female Double-banded Sandgrouse *Pterocles bicinctus* dust-bathing in the road. This observation notes that the bird actually turned right onto her back while dust-bathing and it happened on several occasions.

Click on this link to view the video recording of this behaviour:

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=vFNNEmaxF7c&feature=plcp>

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### References

Clayton DH, Koop JAH, Harbison CW, Moyer BR, Bush SE 2010. How Birds Combat Ectoparasites. The Open Ornithology Journal, Vol 3: 41-71.

Maclean GL 1990. Ornithology for Africa. University of Natal Press: Pietermaritzburg.