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COMMON FISCAL USING MAN-MADE OBJECT DURING FEEDING

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COMMON FISCAL USING MAN-MADE OBJECT DURING FEEDING

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de Swardt (2016) reported on a Common Fiscal *Lanuis collaris* impaling its prey on thorny objects such as Acacia thorns or on the barbs of barbed wire fences. It was always speculated that the shrikes used the thorns of trees or wires to have a better hold on the food item during feeding (see references in de Swardt 2016; Dean 2005).

The following observations were made on 12 July 2017 at Fleurdal, Bloemfontein, Free State, South Africa, of a Common Fiscal. At about 16h30 I observed a female Common Fiscal (one of the few I have ringed) flying with a food object in his beak and perched on the pole of the concrete wall (Figure 1). The female then hooked the prey item on one of the barbs of the security fence above the concrete pole (Figure 2) and started feeding on the food item (Figure 3 & 4). By this feeding technique the Common Fiscal female used the sharp end of the spike of the security fence to obtain a better hold on the food item.

This observation again shows that even in a suburban garden interesting observations can be obtained. Common Fiscals and other *Lanuis* species are known to attach their food items on sharp objects (Dean 2005), but observations like this one are probably few.

Roos & Roos (1988) observed on a rare occasion that a Common Fiscal returned to a stored food item at a later stage.

References

de Swardt DH 2016. Lesser Grey Shrike and Common Fiscal impaling prey. Biodiversity Observations 7.57: 1-2

Dean WRJ 2005. Common Fiscal. In: Hockey PAR, Dean WRJ, Ryan PG (eds). Roberts Birds of Southern Africa (VII th Ed). The Trustees of the John Voelcker Bird Book Fund: Cape Town. pp. 728-729.

Roos ZN, Roos M 1988. Do Fiscal Shrikes feed on their stored food? *Mirafra* 5: 28-29.



Figure 1: The Common Fiscal female perching with her food item on top of the pole of the concrete wall.



Figure 2: The female sitting on the pole after she attached the food item to the sharp point of the security fence.



Figure 3: The female start feeding on the food item using the sharp point of the barb assisting her as a hold during feeding.



Figure 4: The female start feeding on the food item using the sharp point of the barb assisting her as a hold during feeding.