



**West African Ornithological Society
Société d'Ornithologie de l'Ouest
Africain**



**Join the WAOS and support
the future availability of free
pdfs on this website.**

<http://malimbus.free.fr/member.htm>

If this link does not work, please copy it to your browser and try again.

If you want to print this pdf, we suggest you begin on the next page (2) to conserve paper.

**Devenez membre de la
SOOA et soutenez la
disponibilité future des pdfs
gratuits sur ce site.**

<http://malimbus.free.fr/adhesion.htm>

Si ce lien ne fonctionne pas, veuillez le copier pour votre navigateur et réessayer.

Si vous souhaitez imprimer ce pdf, nous vous suggérons de commencer par la page suivante
(2) pour économiser du papier.

Notes on some bird species from Comoé National Park, Ivory Coast

by Volker Salewski

Institut für Vogelforschung,
An der Vogelwarte 21, Vogelwarte Helgoland, 26386 Wilhelmshaven, Germany

Received 17 September 1995

Revised 12 June 1997

Summary

During 13 months in the winters 1994–5 and 1995–6, birds were observed and mist-netted in Comoé National Park, Ivory Coast. The data indicate that some species are more numerous than previously thought and might suggest southward extension of the range of some species.

Résumé

Pendant 13 mois en hivers 1994–5 et 1995–6 les oiseaux étaient observés et capturés dans le Parc National de la Comoé. Les données montrent que quelques espèces sont plus nombreuses que jusqu'ici supposé et donnent un indication d'une extension de l'aire de quelques espèces.

Introduction

From Oct 1994 to Mar 1995 and from Sep 1995 to May 1996 I stayed in the Comoé National Park, Ivory Coast. During this time, observations of birds, including number, habitat and behaviour, were made on 328 days. Mist-netting was also carried out in various places and habitats on 217 days (about 860 h, with between 50 and 70 net-meters set at any one time). The results are from random observations without any systematic sampling.

Previous records were summarized by Thiollay (1985). Some additions to his list were made by Balchin (1988, 1990) and Demey & Fishpool (1991). A list of the bird species of the Comoé NP is available from FGU Kronberg (1980). The present paper adds further information on birds in the Comoé NP. It concentrates on species which seem to have extended or shifted their range in recent years.

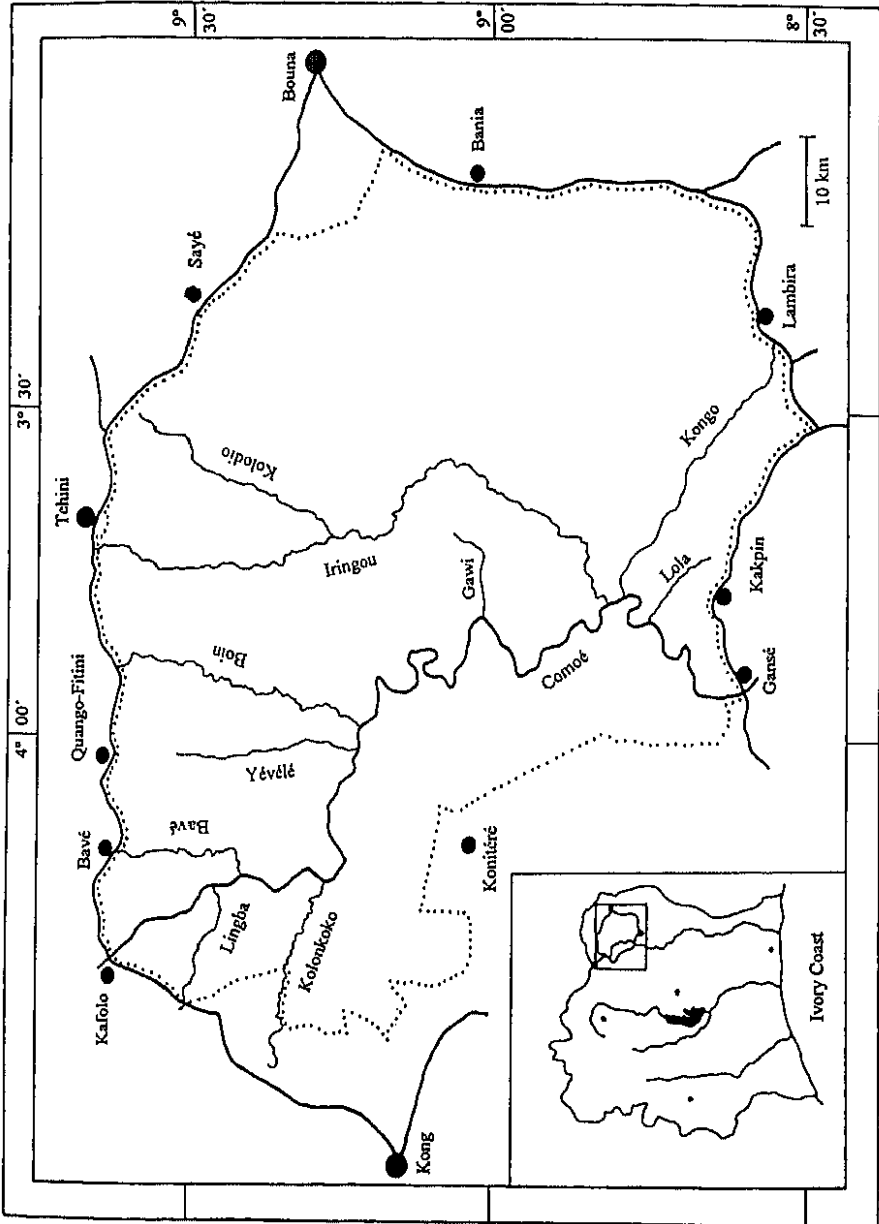


Figure 1. Comoé National Park, Ivory Coast

The study area

The park (Fig. 1) is situated in the north-east of the country between 8°30' and 9°30'N and 3°00' and 4°30'W, mainly between 250-300 m altitude with the highest peak at 635 m. The vegetation is mainly savanna, with open woodland and scattered forests, and with gallery forest along the rivers (Poremski 1991). The south-west of the park belongs to the northern guinea savanna zone whereas the north-east is in the sudan savanna zone (Thiollay 1985). The rainy season usually ends in October, and by the end of December nearly all the grass is burnt by anthropogenic fires. Further details about the park are given by Mühlenberg & Steinhauer (1981).

The investigations took place mainly between the rivers Lola (8°45'N) and Kongo (8°48'N) in the southern part of the park in the most humid and heavily wooded guinea savanna (Fig. 1).

Species list

Abundance is given following the system of Morel & Tye (1995). A total of 280 species was recorded in the park and 138 species were mist-netted. Previous relevant information is summarized in brackets at the end of each species account.

Scopidae

Scopus umbretta Hamerkop. Observed almost every day; old nests found in several places in gallery forest. [In Ivory Coast, only reported in a few scattered localities (Thiollay 1985).]

Ciconiidae

Ciconia abdimii Abdim's Stork. Two records: one overflying gallery forest, 9 Dec 1994; a pair, 13 Jan 1995. [Occasional records, mainly Mar–Jun (Thiollay 1985); recorded from the park by Demeý & Fishpool (1991).]

Accipitridae

Trigonoceps occipitalis White-headed Vulture. Observed frequently throughout the study period, singly or in pairs, mostly soaring high in the air but also perched on trees. An immature with two adults, 27 Nov 1994. About twenty individuals seen soaring together over the carcass of an elephant on 6 Mar 1995. [Uncommon, isolated pairs only (Thiollay 1985).]

Otididae

Neotis denhami Denham's Bustard. Seen several times in open habitats, mainly recently burned areas after fires in Dec. [Declining elsewhere but well represented in the park (Thiollay 1985).]

Scolopacidae

Gallinago media Great Snipe. One bird flushed out of flooded grassland, 28 Oct 1994. Identified by size (slightly bigger than Common Snipe *G. gallinago*) and the white wing bars. [Common around Korhogo (Thiollay 1985).]

Caprimulgidae

Caprimulgus pectoralis Dusky Nightjar. Heard frequently (tape recorded), probably common; a pair mist-netted in Oct 1995; a nest with two eggs in Apr 1996. [Possible observations (Thiollay 1985); recorded for the park (*C. nigriscapularis*) by Demey & Fishpool (1991).]

C. ruficollis Red-necked Nightjar. Seen several times on roads in Feb and Mar 1996. One skin of a road kill collected. New for the park. [Two Ivory Coast records: Katiola and Boundiali (Thiollay 1985).]

Apodidae

Apus caffer White-rumped Swift. Frequent during migration. Five records of small flocks from Sep 1995 and nine from Mar and Apr 1996. Often together with European Swift *A. apus* and swallows. [Not mentioned in FGU Kronberg 1980; few scattered records in the country (Thiollay 1985); cited for the park by Demey & Fishpool 1991.]

Alaudidae

Eremopteryx leucotis Chestnut-backed Finch-Lark. Single birds observed, Feb and Mar 1995, in open habitat near the river Kongo. Three individuals, one an adult male, mist-netted together, 24 Feb 1995. These are apparently the southernmost records in West Africa (Hall & Moreau 1970). New for the park. [Three previous records for Ivory Coast: Lerba Gare in 1977 (Walsh 1986); Korhogo "recently" (Thiollay 1985) and 1990 (Demey & Fishpool 1991).]

Hirundinidae

Hirundo senegalensis Mosque Swallow. Seen several times in Oct and Nov 1994, once in Jan and Oct 1995 and several times between Feb and Apr 1996. [Recorded only in some villages north of 9°N (Thiollay 1985).]

Delichon urbica House Martin. A flock of >1000 flying around some treetops, 23 Nov 1994 near the river Kongo; flocks of several hundred near the mouth of the Lola, 29 and 30 Nov 1994; smaller flocks in Dec 1994 and 1995. Flocks frequent between Jan and Apr 1996. [Flocks recorded between Dabakala and Comoé (Balchin 1988) and from the park itself (Demey & Fishpool 1991).]

Campephagidae

Coracina pectoralis White-Breasted Cuckoo-shrike. Recorded several times throughout the period at about 8°45'N. Carrying nest material in Feb, food in Mar 1996. [Rarely recorded south of 9°N (Thiollay 1985, Demey & Fishpool 1991).]

Turdidae

Cercotrichas leucosticta Forest Scrub-Robin. Heard frequently throughout the period. Three birds mist-netted. [Only in southern parts of the country (Thiollay 1985) but recorded from the park by Mühlenberg et al. (1990), Demey & Fishpool (1991) and Brendle (1991).]

Sylviidae

Acrocephalus schoenobaenus Sedge Warbler. Three mist-netted between 23 Mar and 14 Apr 1996, indicating that it might be a regular migrant. [One record in the country

(Thiollay 1985); observed in the park (Balchin 1988).]

Sylvia borin Garden Warbler. Three caught late Nov 1994 and two in Oct–Nov 1995; a flock of three observed in Nov 1994; one mist-netted on 11 Mar 1995 and 4 Apr 1996. Frequent in Mar–Apr in trees with berries. Perhaps only migrates through the park, not wintering there. [Abundant throughout the country (Thiollay 1985).]

Phylloscopus collybita Chiffchaff. One mist-netted in Dec 1995. Second record for Ivory Coast. [Recorded in the north of the park by Williams (1997).]

Muscicapidae

Muscicapa caerulescens Ashy Flycatcher. Observed several times in gallery forest; new for the park. [Only in southern parts of the country (Thiollay 1985).]

M. gambagae Gambaga Flycatcher. Frequent in savanna and open forest; mistnetted and photographed. [Northern third of the country (Thiollay 1985); observed twice in the park (Balchin 1988).]

M. aquatica Swamp Flycatcher. Mistnetted and photographed (Fig. 2), 30 Nov 1994; new for the park. [Two Ivory Coast records, near Korhogo (Thiollay 1985).]

Ficedula hypoleuca Pied Flycatcher. Abundant Oct–Apr in various habitats; 81 mist-netted. [Thiollay (1985) states that it is less common than Spotted Flycatcher *Muscicapa striata*, a species which was also observed but only frequently.]



Figure 2. Swamp Flycatcher *Muscicapa aquatica*, Comoé N.P., 30 Nov 1994

Nectariniidae

Anthreptes platyra Pygmy Long-Tailed Sunbird. Observed 30 times, Oct–Feb with peak Dec (9); also recorded by Brendle (1991) from the southern parts of the park. Perhaps shifted southward. [Rare in the park which is at the southern limit of its range (Thiollay 1985); FGU Kronberg (1980) records it only from the north of the park.]

Ploceidae

Ploceus luteolus Little Weaver. One male in breeding plumage mist-netted and photographed, 16 Apr 1996; it was among thorny bushes of *Dichrostachys cinerea*, in almost treeless habitat next to the Comoé River. New for the park. [First recorded in Ivory Coast near Ferkessédougou and Ouangolodougou (Holyoak & Seddon 1990).]

P. nigricollis Spectacled Weaver. Frequently observed; 62 mist-netted. [Contra Thiollay (1985), quite common north of 8°N; recorded by Walsh (1986) north of 8°N and by Demey & Fishpool (1991) from the park and Ferkessédougou.]

Petronia dentata Bush Sparrow. Frequently seen; at least 30 mist-netted. Two nests in Jan and Feb 1996 in tree-holes. [Only eight Ivory Coast records in Thiollay (1985); considered numerous in the park by Balchin (1988).]

Estrildidae

Pytilia hypogrammica Yellow-winged Pytilia. 31 sightings and 64 mist-netted. [Uncommon (FGU Kronberg 1980, Thiollay 1985).]

P. phoenicoptera Red-winged Pytilia. 12 sightings and 49 mist-netted, mainly in scattered dense shrub in otherwise open habitat. Probably more abundant than formerly thought. [Only four records for Ivory Coast (Thiollay 1985); reported from the park (Balchin 1988, 1990) including its southern areas (Brendle 1991).]

Estrilda bengala Red-cheeked Cordon-bleu. Abundant in the study area. [Thiollay (1985) reported it only north of 9°N but found in the park by Brendle (1991).]

E. caerulescens Lavender Firefinch. Recorded and mist-netted several times. [Thiollay (1985) recorded it only north 9°N; found in the park by Brendle (1991).]

E. larvata Black-faced Firefinch. Observed frequently; 29 mist-netted. A nest with three eggs found 4 Jan 1996, all birds fledged 25 Jan. [Thiollay (1985) gives only seven records north of 9°N; reported in the park (FGU Kronberg 1980, Brendle 1991) to its southern boundary (Demey & Fishpool 1991).]

Lagonosticta rufopicta Bar-Breasted Firefinch. Uncommon, nine mist-netted. [Four records in the country, all north of 9°N (Thiollay 1985); flocks seen by Balchin (1988) in the park and in the south of the park by Brendle (1991).]

Conclusion

From our observations, only one species (*Ploceus nigricollis*) seems to have extended its range further north, but seven were recorded in more southerly regions than found by Thiollay (1985). If this is due to climatic change, as Thiollay suggested for *Eremopteryx leucotis*, or to more intensive observations in the south of the park is unclear.

Acknowledgments

The Deutsche Forschungsgemeinschaft and Volkswagen AG supported this project. Thanks are also due to Sönke Eggers, Jeanette Fry, Lars Pommerencke, Dorte von Stünzner and Dieter Thomas Tietze who helped with mist-netting and observations, to Prof. Dr. K.E. Linsenmair for permission to stay in the field camp of the University of Würzburg, and to Prof. Dr. F. Bairlein and Charles Mlingwa for their comments on the first draft of this paper.

References

- BALCHIN, C.S. (1988) Recent observations of birds from Ivory Coast. *Malimbus* 10: 201–206.
- BALCHIN, C.S. (1990) Further observations of birds from the Ivory Coast. *Malimbus* 12: 52–53.
- BRENDLE, R. (1991) *Untersuchungen zur Bestandsaufnahme und zur Ortstreue der Avifauna in den Waldinseln der Guinea-Savanne, Elfenbeinküste*. Diploma thesis, Johann Wolfgang Goethe-Universität, Frankfurt.
- DEMEY, R. & FISHPOOL, L.D.C. (1991) Additions and annotations to the avifauna of Côte d'Ivoire. *Malimbus* 12: 61–86.
- FGU KRONBERG (1980) *Liste des Oiseaux du Parc National de la Comoé, Côte d'Ivoire*. FGU, Kronberg & Abidjan.
- HALL, B.P. & MOREAU, R.E. (1970) *An Atlas of Speciation in African Passerine Birds*. Trustees of The British Museum, London.
- HOLYOAK, D.T. & SEDDON, M.B. (1990) Notes on some birds of the Ivory Coast. *Malimbus* 11: 146–148.
- MOREL, G.J. & TYE, A. (1995) Guidelines for avifaunal papers in *Malimbus*. *Malimbus* 17: 35–37.
- MÜHLENBERG, M. & STEINHAUER, B. (1981) *Parc National de la Comoé*. Colordruck, Heidelberg.
- MÜHLENBERG, M., GALAT-LUONG, A., POILECOT, P., STEINHAUER-BURKHART, B. & KÜHN, I. (1990) L'importance des îlots forestiers de savane humide pour la conservation de la faune de forêt dense en Côte d'Ivoire. *Rev. Ecol. (Terre Vie)* 45: 197–214.
- POREMSKI, S. (1991) Beiträge zur Pflanzenwelt des Comoé Nationalparks (Elfenbeinküste). *Natur Mus.* 121: 61–96.
- THIOLLAY, J.-M. (1985) The birds of Ivory Coast: status and distribution. *Malimbus* 7: 1–59.
- WALSH, F. (1986) Notes on the birds of Ivory Coast. *Malimbus* 8: 89–93.
- WILLIAMS, E. (1997) Unusual records of Palearctic warblers Sylviidae in Ivory Coast. *Malimbus* 19: 33–34.