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a flat, coastal region some 150 km south of Dakar). In Senegal, 1994 was also more wet than usual.

*Chelictinia riocourii* Swallow-tailed Kite. At least 24 birds c. 20 km southwest of Kaolack, 30 Nov. Irregular according to Morel & Morel (1990).

*Tryngites subruficollis* Buff-breasted Sandpiper. Five birds in Palmarin, 2 Dec. Four of them were feeding together on short grassland and in some shallow ponds close to the shore. The fifth was observed simultaneously c. 1 km to the north, by other members of our group. The birds were very unafraid and we could approach to 20 m. Only one previous Senegal record (Morel & Morel 1990).

*Charadrius marginatus* White-fronted Sand Plover. Several birds in Palmarin, including a pair with newly hatched chicks, 2 Dec.

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### Observation of Savile's Bustard *Eupodotis savilei* in The Gambia

On 10 September 1996, we surveyed birds in grassy scrub habitat 6 km east of Kaur in the North Bank Province of The Gambia. Between 10h00 and 11h00 we tape-recorded 24 songs. Three birds were heard, about 100 m apart; the songs came from the ground and were given in apparent response to each other. CRB and Mo Ceesay saw a small, short-necked bustard with a blue-grey head, stalking through low grass where we heard the songs. We then heard two more singing birds in a millet field 2 km further west and saw a bustard flying fast and low from the source of these songs. It was small (hardly larger than a Pied Crow *Corvus albus*); with a long thin neck and large head, both buffy, and black belly; the wings had a pale stripe running

lengthwise; the bird flew with shallow wingbeats and the legs trailed behind. CRB heard the songs again on 18 November just west of Kaur.

The songs consisted of a piping whistle lasting 0.15 s followed by a series of 6–14 piping whistles each with a duration of 0.04 s and forming a trill at a rate of 10 whistles per s. The waveform (amplitude plot: Fig. 1a) shows that the initial whistle is loud, while the amplitude of the trill changes, with the first whistles being soft, the next ones increasingly loud, and the last ones decreasing in loudness near the end of the series. The initial whistle is 2 kHz in pitch and the trill whistles are similar in pitch but waver within a range of 0.1 kHz (spectrograph: Fig. 1b). The songs were repeated regularly about every 20 s.

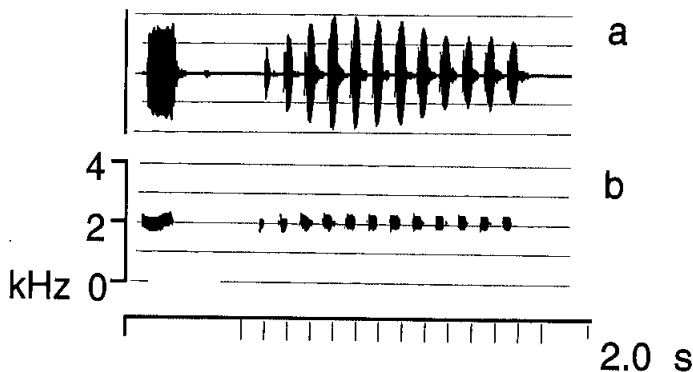


Fig. 1. Audiospectrogram of Savile's Bustard near Kaur, The Gambia.  
a — waveform; b — spectrograph.

The three forms of the *Eupodotis ruficrista* complex appear to represent three species, the Red-crested Bustard *E. ruficrista* of southern Africa, Buff-crested Bustard *E. gindiana* of East Africa, and Savile's Bustard *E. savilei* of West Africa. The three were recognized as distinct species by Bannerman (1931), Jackson (1938), Chappuis *et al.* (1979), and Sibley & Monroe (1990). They have also recently been regarded as a single species (Collar *et al.* 1986, Dowsett & Dowsett-Lemaire 1993). Chappuis *et al.* (1979) described song differences among the three. All 24 songs that we recorded

in The Gambia were similar to those of the normal song of *E. savilei* in northern Nigeria in their low, nearly unmodulated pitch, and in the duration of phrases, but differed in the equal pitch of the initial and trill whistles (the initial call is higher than the trill in Nigerian birds) and in the regular rhythm of the trill (accelerates in Nigerian birds: Fig. 4K of Chappuis *et al.* 1979). Our observations indicate that *E. savilei* occurs in The Gambia, an extension of the previously known range (Gore 1990, Morel & Morel 1990), and perhaps a result of the increasing loss of wooded vegetation and the southward extension of the dry country of the north (Gore 1990).

RBP and LLP examined the five specimens of *E. savilei* taken in northern Senegal (Morel & Morel 1990) now in the ORSTOM collection at Mbour, Senegal, and these appeared to be the same species as we observed at Kaur.

Mo Ceesay helped find birds in the field. For access to the ORSTOM collection we thank P. Reynaud. Fieldwork was supported by a National Science Foundation research grant (IBN-9412399) to RBP.

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