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Short Notes — Notes Courtes

New bird records from Comoé National Park, Ivory Coast

Comoé National Park (CNP) is situated in the northeast corner of Ivory Coast. A list of 445 species was produced by FGU Kronberg (1980). Further records were added by, e.g. Thiollay (1985), Balchin (1988), Demey & Fishpool (1991) and Salewski (1997). During a stay in the park from September 1996 to April 1997, two new species were observed, and new breeding records obtained for two others.

The Wood Ibis *Mycteria ibis* and Marabou Stork *Leptoptilos crumeniferus* are widespread in tropical Africa (Brown *et al.* 1982) and are recorded from every W African country (Dowsett & Forbes-Watson 1993). In Ivory Coast, Thiollay (1985) considered them vagrant/uncommon Afrotropical migrants, occurring mainly in CNP. According to Dowsett & Forbes-Watson, breeding is not confirmed, although Demey & Fishpool (1991) reported a colony of Wood Ibis in CNP. Between 30 March and 1 April 1997, a mixed breeding colony of these species was observed at about 9°20'N, 4°14'W. It was in a large *Ceiba pentandra* tree, in the gallery forest of the Comoé River, and was visible from the track there. The colony consisted of at least seven Wood Ibis nests, three containing two chicks, one one chick, and in another, the number of chicks was not discernible. Two nests were empty. A maximum of nine adults and eight immatures was observed in the tree. There was one nest of Marabou Stork with at least one chick. A maximum of two adults was observed. These observations change the status of Marabou Stork in Ivory Coast from Afrotropical migrant to breeder.

An adult White-backed Night Heron *Gorsachius leuconotus* was observed in the gallery forest of the Comoé River at about 8°40'N on 20 Feb 1997. It had a dark head with yellow eye-ring reaching the bill, buffish neck, dark back, whitish belly and yellowish legs. This is further north than reported for the species by Thiollay (1985), although there is a record in NE Ghana, even further north (Grimes 1987).

A Green Twinspot *Hypargos nitidulus* was mist-netted and photographed in dense gallery forest of the Iringou River at about 8°50'N on 10 October 1996. This is also much further north than reported by Thiollay (1985).

These two additions bring the CNP list to 494 species (Salewski in prep.).

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First observations on the nest of Purple-headed Starling *Lamprotornis purpureiceps*

The Purple-headed Starling *Lamprotornis purpureiceps* is a common species of various forest types over a wide range of the Guineo-Congolian region. Yet, its nest is surprisingly difficult to find. In 20 years of field work at the biological station of M'Passa in NE Gabon, Brosset & Erard (1986) failed to locate it but wrote: "Vu ... des individus s'intéressant à des cavités dans des branches mortes en haut de grands émergents". During 13 months spent in Odzala National Park in N Congo, I made similar observations of a pair visiting a broken stump of *Santiria trimera* at a height of c. 25 m. The birds were around for at least two weeks (Nov–Dec) but no breeding attempt ensued.

While surveying the avifauna of Lobeke Reserve in SE Cameroon in Apr 1997, a nest, presumed to contain young, was found in a 30-m tall *Alstonia boonei*, in semi-evergreen forest with open canopy. The hole was situated in the stump left by the fall of an old lateral branch, at a height of c. 26 m, and faced south. On 13 April, the pair flew into the tree with food, the male (sexed by its behaviour, especially by its singing) entering the nest before the female; the latter stayed in the nest for just over