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entre les deux partenaires. Je n'ai pas vu d'autres couples rester à leur tour sur le palmier. Le manège a duré plus de 15 min., puis toute la bande est repartie.

Auparavant, j'avais déjà vu plusieurs fois des carroussels semblables, mais sans pouvoir en observer les détails. De loin, on n'est jamais sûr si un ou plusieurs oiseaux sont restés sur le palmier, l'attention étant attiré par le mouvement continu de l'ensemble: probablement c'est un moyen efficace de protection de la part du couple (qui aurait donc besoin de plusieurs minutes d'immobilité avant la copulation) contre les prédateurs.

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### **Brown-throated Sand Martin *Riparia paludicola*, new for Ivory Coast**

The Brown-throated Sand Martin *Riparia paludicola* is widespread in Africa apart from deserts and rain forests (Keith *et al.* 1992). In West Africa it is recorded as vagrant in Senegal, a migrant in The Gambia and resident in Guinea, Ghana, Togo, Benin and Nigeria (Dowsett & Forbes-Watson 1993). There are no previous records for Ivory Coast (Thiollay 1985, Dowsett & Forbes-Watson 1993).

During repeated stays in the European winter months since 1994 in the southwest of Comoé National Park, Ivory Coast (Salewski 1997), Brown-throated Sand Martin was observed frequently; these are apparently the first records for the country. It was identified by its appearance, which is like Sand Martin *R. riparia* but without the brown breast-band and with a rather brown throat compared with the whitish belly. The latter character, together with the lack of any white spots on the tail feathers, also distinguished it from the similar looking Rock Martin *Hirundo fuligula*. Flocks with several hundred individuals of this species were seen in March and April, including: 31 Mar 1996 and 16 Apr 1996 (several hundred, less than 1000), 17 Mar 1997 (several hundreds), 18 Mar 1997 (c. 10). The flocks were observed over open savannah habitat and not very high. On other occasions between the given dates, flocks of swallows including members of the genus *Riparia* were seen, flying too high to permit certain identification, but it is very likely that Brown-throated Sand Martins were amongst them too. They were often associated with other swallows, including Barn Swallow *H. rustica*, House Martin *Delichon urbica* or Striped Swallow *H. abyssinica*.

The restricted time when these flocks were observed and their sporadic appearance indicate that the species is only a seasonal visitor in northern Ivory Coast. In the countries north of Ivory Coast (Mali, Burkina Faso) the Brown-throated Sand Martin is a breeding resident (Dowsett & Forbes-Watson 1993). In Ghana it occurs locally in northern savannas between October and May but breeding is unrecorded (Grimes 1987). In Togo it is rare, with only five records in the northern savannas, but is probably resident (Cheke & Walsh 1996).

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