



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.

Additions and corrections to the avifauna of Central African Republic

by R.J. Dowsett¹, Patrice Christy² & Max Germain³

¹12 rue des Lavandes, 34190 Ganges, France (email: dowsett@aol.com)

²B.P.2240, Libreville, Gabon

³44 rue Cluseret, 92150 Suresnes, France

Received 26 March 1997

Revised 18 January 1999

Summary

A further 44 species are added to the list of birds of Central African Republic presented by Dowsett (1993, Afrotropical avifaunas: annotated country checklists. *Tauraco Res. Rep.* 5: 1–322), as a result of recent exploration of the Ngotto area in the south. Explanation is given for the deletion of 54 species formerly reported from the country. The number of species known from the country now stands at 698.

Résumé

Sont ajoutées 44 espèces à la liste des oiseaux de la République Centrafricaine présentée par Dowsett (1993, Afrotropical avifaunas: annotated country checklists. *Tauraco Res. Rep.* 5: 1–322), à la suite d'observations faites principalement dans la région de Ngotto, dans le sud. Explication est donné, de la radiation de 54 espèces antérieurement signalés de ce pays. Le nombre d'espèces actuellement connues de R.C.A. s'établit à 698.

Introduction

Recent fieldwork in southern Central African Republic by PC, F. Dowsett-Lemaire (FDL) and RJD has added a further 41 species to the list of the country's avifauna (as documented by Dowsett 1993: 168–175). It is also necessary to elucidate the status of some species listed for C.A.R. in the key checklist of Carroll (1988), and even to reject some, as we had already anticipated (Dowsett 1993). Further examination of the literature shows there to be a few claimed records of species overlooked by these authors, some of which we believe are acceptable.

Carroll (1988) presented an annotated checklist of the birds of C.A.R., resulting in a large part from his own research there, but including also observations of MG

(especially in the Lobaye region). Unfortunately some of MG's observations were misrepresented and, as discussed by Germain (1992), a significant number had to be deleted from the Lobaye area list, as he had no firm record of them there (merely listing them as hypothetical). Dowsett (1993) has indicated for which species these were the only claimed observations in C.A.R. and which, therefore, needed to be deleted from the country's avifauna. Our recent investigations in the Lobaye region mean that a number of these species can now be reinstated.

There are also a number of species in Carroll's list whose occurrence in the country was based on unproven if not improbable observations from areas other than the Lobaye. We present here our reasons for rejecting or withholding acceptance of these species. Our comments are made in the light of MG's considerable experience of the Lobaye avifauna, and of recent exploration of the Ngotto area of the Lobaye, notably by PC. The taxonomic treatment is that of Dowsett & Forbes-Watson (1993).

We also discuss a few doubtful records based on sources other than Carroll (1988).

Additions to the Central African Republic avifauna

Additions from the Ngotto area (3°50'N, 17°20'E) result from a day's visit by RJD in Mar 1994, and a total of two months spent in that area in Jun–Jul 1994 and Feb–Mar 1995 by PC. Most of these species were to be expected; those marked with a ¹ had in fact been listed by Carroll (1988) but rejected by Germain (1992) through lack of evidence at that time. Fourteen of these (marked ²) were also found in the Dzanga-Ndoki area (c. 2°13'N, 16°12'E), on the border with Congo-Brazzaville, by FDL in Apr 1996. In addition to the following, some species new to Dowsett's (1993) list were detailed by Bretagnolle (1993) and Germain & Cornet (1994).

Accipitridae

Aquila pomarina Lesser Spotted Eagle. While at Bomassa (2°12'N, 16°12'E), on the Congo-Brazzaville/C.A.R. border, FDL saw two singles fly northwards on 16 and 17 Apr 1996 (Dowsett-Lemaire 1997b); the distinctive shape and lack of any obvious underwing pattern were well seen.

Falconidae

Falco subbuteo European Hobby. Blancou (1938) collected a specimen at Ndélé, 29 Apr 1934: a record overlooked by Carroll (1988) and Dowsett (1993).

Rallidae

Rallus caerulescens African Water Rail. Although Dowsett (1993) doubted a record from Manovo (Carroll 1988), J.L. Tello (pers. comm.) has subsequently confirmed the existence of the species there.

Otididae

Ardeotis arabs Arabian Bustard. Rejected by Dowsett (1993) as firm evidence was lacking, although its occurrence had been suggested by Serle & Morel (1977) and

Mackworth-Præd & Grant (1970–3). However, PC has since found it in Bamingui National Park: one bird seen several times at Sangba airstrip (7°35'N, 20°15'E), Apr 1998. J.L. Tello reports that it breeds in the area.

Burhinidae

Burhinus oedicnemus Stone Curlew. PC identified one that had been hit by a car at night near Grima (4°01'N, 17°04'E), 26 Feb 1995. This is considerably further south than any other report from central Africa.

Columbidae

Columba delegorguei Bronze-naped Pigeon. Ngotto, in undisturbed forest and exploited areas, Jun 1994 (PC).

Cuculidae

Cercococcyx olivinus Olive Long-tailed Cuckoo². Ngotto, in gallery and closed forest, Feb–Mar 1995 (PC).

Strigidae

Otus icterorhynchus Sandy Scops Owl. Heard (a series of descending whistles) at Bomassa (Congo-Brazzaville/C.A.R.) by FDL, 17 Apr 1996 (Dowsett-Lemaire 1997b).

Bubo leucostictus Akun Eagle Owl¹. Detected in forest near Mbaere river, Ngotto, Jul 1994, by its call, with which the observer is very familiar (PC).

Glaucidium tephronotum Red-chested Owlet. Heard calling in exploited forest, Ngotto, Jun 1994 (up to 4 singers at same station); once in closed forest, dry season, Mar 1995 (PC).

G. sjostedti Sjöstedt's Barred Owlet. Seen and heard in closed forest, Ngotto area, Jun 1994, Feb 1995 (PC).

G. capense Barred Owlet. Seen and heard often in degraded forest and edge, Ngotto, Jun 1994 (PC).

Apodidae

Apus pallidus Pallid Swift. A small group (fewer than 10) was observed in good conditions by PC, 23 Feb 1995, hunting over savanna near the Lobaye river, Ngotto (together with House Martins *Delichon urbica*).

Trogonidae

Apaloderma aequatoriale Bare-cheeked Trogon^{1,2}. Frequent in Ngotto area, especially in swampy forest, near Batouri and Limbalakata, Jun–Jul 1994, Mar 1995; also in exploited forest, Jun–Jul (PC).

Meropidae

Merops apiaster European Bee-eater. Ngotto (PC).

Phoeniculidae

Phoeniculus castaneiceps Forest Wood Hoopoe¹. One pair, forest edge, Gbenguendara, Ngotto area, Mar 1995 (PC).

Hirundinidae

Pseudochelidon eurystomina River Martin. 3 or 4 seen at Ngotto 20 Mar 1994 (RJD). This migrant was already known from as far up the Ubangui River as Bétou, Congo-Brazzaville (3°05'N, 18°32'E) (Chapin 1953).

Pycnonotidae

Andropadus ansorgei Ansorge's Greenbul². Seen and heard in undisturbed forest, and edge near Bambio, Ngotto (PC).

Calyptocichla serina Golden Greenbul^{1,2}. Seen in exploited forest and edge, Ngotto area, Jun 1994 (PC).

Baeopogon clamans Sjöstedt's Honeyguide Greenbul². C. 10 observations in undisturbed and exploited forest, Ngotto (PC).

Criniger chloronotus Eastern Bearded Greenbul². Frequent in understorey of undisturbed forest, Ngotto (PC).

Turdidae

Neocossyphus rufus Red-tailed Ant Thrush¹. Quantrill (1995) reported this species from the Bayanga area (2°54'N, 16°15'E); it was found common at Ngotto (PC).

Erythropygia hartlaubi Brown-backed Scrub Robin¹. Frequent in forest edge at Bambio (3°56'N, 17°00'E) and closed savanna near Mbaere River, Ngotto (PC).

Sylviidae

Eremomela badiceps Rufous-crowned Eremomela. Seen in canopy of degraded forest, gallery, and forest edge near Bambio, Ngotto (PC).

Sylvietta denti Lemon-bellied Crombec^{1,2}. Seen well, forest canopy, Ngotto, singing Jun–Jul (RJD, PC).

Cisticola eximius Black-backed Cloud Cisticola. Several singing at Gordil airstrip (9°44'N, 21°35'E), Jul 1998; common in floodplains of Manovo-Gounda-St Floris N.P. at Gounda (9°25'N, 20°57'E); mostly in grassland without trees or shrubs (PC). Mapped by Hall & Moreau (1970) on Oubangui River at c. 20°E, but this is the locality Bosodula (Schouteden 1955) in Congo-Kinshasa. Possibly occurs on the C.A.R. side of the river; recently found in N Congo-Brazzaville (Dowsett-Lemaire 1997a).

Apalis jacksoni Black-throated Apalis. Ngotto: seen and heard in emergents in exploited forest, Jun 1994 (PC).

A. nigriceps Black-capped Apalis. Dowsett (1993) questioned the occurrence of this species in C.A.R., having found no record to support the comment by White (1962) of "Nola–Mbaiki" (*i.e.* between Nola and Mbaiki). But PC has confirmed its presence in the same area, in emergents at Ngotto, Jun 1994.

A. rufogularis Buff-throated Apalis². Frequent at edge of clearing, Gbenguendara, Ngotto, Mar 1995; nominate race, with male blackish on face and chest (RJD, PC).

Muscicapidae

Ficedula albicollis Collared Flycatcher. Dowsett (1993) questioned this species, mentioned by Mackworth-Praed & Grant (1973), in view of possible confusion with the recently separated Half-collared Flycatcher *F. semitorquata*. However, MG subsequently examined the specimen collected by Dybowski and confirmed it as *F. albicollis* (Germain & Cornet 1994).

Muscicapa epulata Little Grey Flycatcher¹. Ngotto (PC).

Platysteiridae

Batis poensis Fernando Po Batis. Three observations, Ngotto: forest edge at

Gbenguendara, Mar 1995; gallery between Ngotto and Lobaye River, Jun 1994; in a mixed party in exploited forest, Jun 1994 (PC).

Dyaphorophya tonsa White-spotted Wattle-eye^{1,2}. One seen in a mixed party in undisturbed forest, Ngotto, Jul 1994 (PC).

Nectariniidae

Nectarinia batesi Bates's Sunbird. Two observations by forest roads, Ngotto, Jun 1994 (PC).

N. reichenbachii Reichenbach's Sunbird. Ngotto: locally common in riverine forest of Mbaere River and clumps of trees in swampy savannas at Gbenguendara (PC).

N. minulla Tiny Sunbird². Ngotto: swampy forest by Mbaere River, especially at flowering *Anthocleista*, Feb 1995 (PC).

N. bifasciata Purple-banded Sunbird. Common in savanna around Ngotto and to the Lobaye River, including singing males, a female with young, Feb–Mar 1995 (PC).

N. johannae Johanna's Sunbird². Uncommon in clearings near Mbaere River, Jun 1994, Feb 1995; gallery forest between Ngotto and Lobaye River, Feb 1995 (PC).

Anthreptes fraseri Fraser's Sunbird². Uncommon in all forest types, Ngotto; red tufts of males seen well, as was the olive head (separating it from *A. f. axillaris*) (RJD, PC).

Ploceidae

Ploceus albinucha Maxwell's Black Weaver². Seen in exploited and undisturbed forest (once in mixed party), Ngotto, Jun 1994, Mar 1995 (PC).

P. preussi Preuss's Golden-backed Weaver. Found not uncommon by FDL in the Bomassa area, Apr 1996 (Dowsett-Lemaire 1997b).

Malimbus coronatus Red-crowned Malimbe^{1,2}. Frequent in Ngotto area in degraded forest where seen nesting over old forest roads, Jun 1994 (PC).

Brachycope anomala Bob-tailed Weaver. Jehl (1976) reports this species from Bangui, an extension northwards of its known range. This record was overlooked by Carroll (1988) and Dowsett (1993).

Estrildidae

Spermophaga haematina Bluebill. Listed by Carroll (1988), but transferred to Red-headed Bluebill *S. ruficapilla* by Dowsett (1993), who believed there to have been a misidentification, based on the occurrence of this species in the south-east of the country (Friedmann 1978). However, Germain & Cornet (1994) confirmed that the species present in southwestern C.A.R. is indeed *S. haematina*, and PC found it common in Ngotto.

Deletions from the Central African Republic avifauna

There are some 40 species listed from C.A.R. by Carroll (1988), and not discussed by Germain & Cornet (1994), whose occurrence is either highly improbable or of such rarity, or which present identification problems, that without further details they

cannot be accepted for the country. These are listed with the part of the country from which Carroll (1988) reported each, as follows: Region 1 Manovo-Gounda-Saint Floris National Park (i.e. northern C.A.R.); Region 2 Lobaye Préfecture (southern C.A.R.); Region 4 Bamingui area (northern C.A.R.); Region 5 Haute Sangha Préfecture (south-western C.A.R.); Region 6 Bamingui-Bangoran National Park (northern C.A.R.). Some of these species we consider possible but in need of proof (P), while others are so unlikely as to be almost certainly wrong (X). Our comments on distribution in other African countries are based in large part on the annotated tables of Dowsett (1993).

We also include below a few doubtful records based on sources other than Carroll (1988).

Phalacrocoracidae

Phalacrocorax carbo White-breasted Cormorant. Region 1; P. No more than a very scarce non-breeding visitor to neighbouring countries, and often confused with *P. africanus* when not in nuptial dress.

Anatidae

Thalassornis leuconotus White-backed Duck. P. Two reportedly collected at Botambi on 26 Nov 1970 (Moindrot), but the specimens could not be found by MG in 1977.

Anas sparsa African Black Duck. A possible sight record (Blancou 1938) cannot be accepted, but ought to be kept in mind.

Accipitridae

Neophron percnopterus Egyptian Vulture. Region 1; P. Known to the north of C.A.R., in neighbouring Chad and Sudan. Although it may well occur in C.A.R., and is thus mapped by Brown *et al.* (1982), confirmation would be desirable. Often confused with Palm-nut Vulture *Gypohierax angolensis*, as admitted by Blancou (1938–39) in C.A.R..

Gyps fulvus Griffon Vulture. Region 4; X. Palearctic migrant with very few records in NE Africa, south to about 13°N in Sudan (Nikolaus 1987) and perhaps the Lake Chad area (Salvan 1968). Any record as far south as C.A.R. would need careful documentation.

Circaetus gallicus Short-toed Eagle. Region 4. This species, *C. pectoralis* and *C. beaudouini* (all reported by Carroll 1988), are very closely related or even considered conspecific, e.g. by Dowsett & Forbes-Watson (1993). Dowsett (1993: 168) admits this species to the C.A.R. list merely as an intra-African migrant, on the basis of Carroll's report of *C. (g.) beaudouini*. *C. g. gallicus* might occur as a migrant from the Palearctic, but would be very difficult to separate in the field from *beaudouini*. *C. (g.) pectoralis* (reported from Region 1) is absent from W Africa, and although known from Sudan (Nikolaus 1987), it is essentially a bird of S and E Africa, north to S Congo-Brazzaville (Dowsett-Lemaire & Dowsett 1991), and unlikely in N C.A.R.

Accipiter minullus Little Sparrowhawk. Region 1; X. Unknown from W and west-central Africa, probably confused with the allopatric sibling *A. erythropus*. Carroll (1988) was wrong to list both.

Buteo rufinus Long-legged Buzzard. Region 1; X. This palaeartic migrant avoids the forest zone of central Africa; occurrence in C.A.R. not impossible, but often confused with other species (Dowsett & Kemp 1988).

Aquila verreauxii Black Eagle. Region 1; P. This species of extensive rocky hills is known from very few parts of the Sahel in NE Africa. It is known not far from the C.A.R. border in W Sudan (Nikolaus 1987), and has been mapped from C.A.R. by Brown *et al.* (1982), but its occurrence in northern C.A.R. would represent a range extension, and we believe it should be documented in detail.

Hieraaetus ayresii Ayres's Hawk Eagle. Region 2; P. A few records from neighbouring countries, but although mapped throughout C.A.R. by Brown *et al.* (1982), the only published records are by Carroll (1988), and we believe details are desirable. It has, however, recently been found in nearby SE Cameroon and N Congo (Dowsett-Lemaire & Dowsett 1998).

Falconidae

Polihierax semitorquatus Pygmy Falcon. Region 1; X. Known in NE Africa from Sudan and Ethiopia, but not Chad. The nearest record to C.A.R. is in the extreme south of Sudan at about 4°N, 30°E (Dowsett *in* Snow 1978; Nikolaus 1987), in the Juba region at Missa, Hannar Koke (specimen in National Museum, Nairobi, examined by RJD). Any observations from C.A.R. would require proof.

Phasianidae

Francolinus streptophorus Ring-necked Francolin. Region 1; X. Known only from Cameroon (Louette 1981) and E Africa, no nearer to C.A.R. than W Uganda (Britton 1980). Full details should be published of any C.A.R. record.

Turnicidae

Ortyxelos meiffrenii Quail-plover. Region 1; P. The nearest known populations are in the Sahel zone in N Cameroon and Chad (Snow 1978; Urban *et al.* 1986). Its occurrence in C.A.R. is at first glance unlikely, even though reported from this country by Serle & Morel (1977), presumably following Mackworth-Praed & Grant (1970), whom we suspect of having confused localities. We have traced no published specimen data.

Rallidae

Canirallus oculus Grey-throated Rail. Region 1; P. Listed from Manovo by Carroll (1988) but improbable so far north. May occur in the southern forests.

Sarothrura lugens Long-toed Flufftail. P. Although not detailed in the text by Keith *et al.* (1970), a locality is clearly shown on their map for this species, which seems to be within C.A.R., in the Bouar-Bozoum area. But there is no record in the text that cannot be accounted for as extralimital to C.A.R. Without details of the locality, which may be that mapped as being in neighbouring Congo-Brazzaville by Snow (1978) and Urban *et al.* (1986), we cannot accept *S. lugens* for the country.

Gruidae

Anthropoides virgo Demoiselle Crane. Bouet (1955) mentions it (noted by Blancou) from C.A.R.; while not impossible, we believe this requires confirmation.

Otididae

Eupodotis ruficrista Red-crested Korhaan. X. Reported from C.A.R. by Serle & Morel (1977) but we are unaware of firm evidence; perhaps based on Mackworth-Praed & Grant (1970–3).

Burhinidae

Burhinus vermiculatus Water Dikkop. Region 1; X. Carroll (1988) reported it from Manovo, but PC has searched there in vain and believes the record a misidentification of *B. senegalensis*.

Scolopacidae

Limosa lapponica Bar-tailed Godwit. Region 1; P. Rare inland in Africa on passage (Dowsett 1980), and full details of the C.A.R. observation are needed.

Tringa erythropus Spotted Redshank. Region 1; P. Listed by both Carroll (1988) and Green & Carroll (1991). There are few good records of this Palaearctic migrant in central Africa and, as it has at times been confused with other species, details of any C.A.R. observations are desirable. A.A. Green (pers. comm.), who found Common Redshank *Tringa totanus* to be uncommon to frequent on sandbars in the Sangha River in the dry season, but never saw Spotted Redshank, concurs with this deletion.

T. solitaria Solitary Sandpiper. Region 5; X. Only one acceptable Afrotropical record: one seen and photographed in Zambia (Aspinwall *et al.* 1995). One specimen was claimed (from Cabinda), by Bocage (1881); but it is not mentioned by Pinto (1983), and the specimen would presumably have perished in the Museu Bocage fire of 1975. One tentative sight record from South Africa (Kieser 1980) was not accepted by Hockey *et al.* (1986), but was unfortunately included without comment by Hayman *et al.* (1986). Without full details of the C.A.R. record (which was not mentioned by Carroll 1982) we do not believe it should be accepted.

Calidris canutus Knot. Region 1; X. Dowsett (1980) found no acceptable inland record, though there has subsequently been one from Zambia (Dowsett *et al.* in press). Full documentation is required for records from C.A.R.

Sternidae

Sterna albifrons guineae Little Tern. Bouet (1955) mentions it (noted by Dybowski) from C.A.R.; while not impossible, we believe this requires confirmation.

Columbidae

Streptopelia capicola Cape Turtle Dove. Region 1; X. This southern and eastern species is known no nearer to C.A.R. than E Sudan (Nikolaus 1987) and S Congo-Brazzaville (Dowsett-Lemaire & Dowsett 1991), and was presumably misidentified by Carroll (1988).

Strigidae

Jubula lettii Maned Owl. Reported from Ngotto (Christy 1995), based on call, but in view of confusion over the voice of this species, best considered unproven.

Apodidae

Apus batesi Bates's Swift. Region 1; P. Claimed by Carroll (1988) to be present in Manovo. Unlikely so far north but may occur in southern forest area.

Alcedinidae

Alcedo semitorquata Half-collared Kingfisher. Region 5; X. A bird of E and S Africa, unknown from countries bordering C.A.R. in west-central Africa. The transposition of captions on the map presented by Snow (1978) might have given the impression that it is this species rather than *A. quadribrachys* which occurs in C.A.R.

Meropidae

Merops oreobates Cinnamon-breasted Bee-eater. Regions 2, 6; X. A highland species of E Africa (Fry 1984). It seems certain that C.A.R. reports result from confusion with some other species, such as *M. variegatus*. A.A. Green (pers. comm.) found the latter species in savanna patches surrounded by forest of Bayanga (Dzanga-Sangha) but never saw *M. oreobates*, nor did he at Bamingui-Bangoran National Park, in north-central C.A.R., where *M. hirundineus* occurs and looks somewhat similar.

M. malimbicus Rosy Bee-eater. Region 2; P. Germain (1992) has rejected this species from the Lobaye list. It was also reported from the Oubangui (Thibaut, *in* Bouet 1961); its status remains to be confirmed.

Bucerotidae

Tockus alboterminatus Crowned Hornbill. Region 1; X. Unknown from this part of west-central Africa (see Fry *et al.* 1988, Kemp 1995), and likely confused (probably with *T. fasciatus*).

Lybiidae

Gymnobucco peli Bristle-nosed Barbet. Region 2; X. Although listed from the Lobaye by Carroll (1988) and not rejected by Germain (1992), our further research in the area suggests it is unlikely to occur there.

Picidae

Campethera maculosa Golden-backed Woodpecker. Region 5; X. Absent east of Ghana; its claimed occurrence in C.A.R. must represent a misidentification, probably of *C. cailliautii*, which A.A. Green (pers. comm.) found both at the Bayanga area, in the rainforest of the south-west, and the Bamingui area, in Guinea savanna of the north-central C.A.R.. Carroll (1982) does not list *C. maculosa*. Although Carroll (1988) lists both *C. cailliautii* and *C. permista* from C.A.R., the two are allopatric (probably conspecific).

Alaudidae

Mirafra cantillans Singing Bush-Lark. Region 1; P. Reported from Manovo by Carroll (1988) but not found during recent visits by PC.

M. africana Rufous-naped Lark. Region 2; X. The nearest populations of this species are in highland N Cameroon and adjacent Nigeria (Louette 1981, Ash *et al.* 1989), reappearing in central Congo-Brazzaville (Dowsett & Dowsett-Lemaire 1989) and adjacent Gabon (Dowsett 1993). The superficially similar Red-winged Bush Lark *M. hypermetra* occurs in W Sudan (Nikolaus 1987). The occurrence of either in southern C.A.R. seems unlikely.

Hirundinidae

Psalidoprocne obscura Fanti Saw-wing. Region 1; X. Not known east of Mt Came-

roon (Louette 1981); its claimed occurrence in C.A.R. is most likely the result of misidentification. Unfortunately Carroll's record was accepted by Keith *et al.* (1992).

Motacillidae

Anthus richardi Richard's Pipit. Region 1; X. Practically unknown from west-central Africa, but occurs in highland populations in Cameroon and adjacent Nigeria (Louette 1981, RJD & FDL) and central Congo-Brazzaville (Dowsett & Dowsett-Lemaire 1989). It is reported as a migrant in Chad and Sudan (Salvan 1968, Nikolaus 1987). Not always easy to identify, and details needed to prove occurrence in C.A.R..

Campephagidae

Campephaga flava Black Cuckoo-shrike. Region 1; P. This migrant is almost unknown from W and west-central Africa, where it is replaced by Red-shouldered Cuckoo-shrike *C. phoenicea*, with which there may have been confusion. But known from Sudan not far from the C.A.R. border (Nikolaus 1987).

Coracina caesia Grey Cuckoo-shrike. Region 1; X. A highland species, unexpected in C.A.R.. Probably a misidentification, and it is unfortunate that Keith *et al.* (1992) accepted it (as vagrant). Full details should be published.

Turdidae

Turdus philomelos Song Thrush. Region 1; X. Palearctic species known south of the Sahara only by a very few records in extreme W and NE Africa. Possible vagrants to C.A.R. would need to be documented.

Cercotrichas podobe Black Scrub Robin. Region 4; P. Given the distribution of this Sahel species in W Sudan (Nikolaus 1987), its presence in C.A.R. would not be impossible. But it represents a significant extension southwards, and ought to be documented.

Myrmecocichla tholloni Congo Moor Chat. Region 1; X. Although this record was accepted by Dowsett (1993), we now believe that the occurrence of this species in northern C.A.R. is highly unlikely.

Sylviidae

Acrocephalus gracilirostris Lesser Swamp Warbler. Region 1; P. Except for a population at Lake Chad (Dowsett & Moore 1997), absent from W and west-central Africa. C.A.R. reports probably result from confusion with the widespread Greater Swamp Warbler *A. rufescens*, known from specimens and birds captured by MG.

Timaliidae

Turdoides tenebrosus Dusky Babbler. Region 1; P. Known from a very limited area of E Africa, but occurs in Sudan on the border with eastern C.A.R. (Nikolaus 1987). Its occurrence elsewhere in C.A.R. needs confirmation.

Oriolidae

Oriolus larvatus Eastern Black-headed Oriole. Regions 2, 5; X. Claims for this southern species from the Lobaye and Sangha area (Carroll 1988) are probably the result of misidentifications.

Laniidae

Lanius excubitor Great Grey Shrike. Region 1; X. Known from neighbouring

Cameroon, Chad and Sudan, but can be confused with other grey shrikes, particularly Grey-backed Fiscal *L. excubitoroides*, which occurs in NE C.A.R. Bretagnolle (1993), so details would be required.

Malaconotidae

Dryoscopus angolensis Pink-footed Puffback. Region 1; X. Almost entirely a highland species, in west-central Africa from Cameroon (Louette 1981), mainland Equatorial Guinea (Dowsett-Lemaire & Dowsett in prep.) and S Congo-Brazzaville (Dowsett & Dowsett-Lemaire 1989). Although reported from "Ostliches Kamerun" (Reichenow 1911), its presence in C.A.R. would need documentation.

Sturnidae

Creatophora cinerea Wattled Starling. P. Reported from eastern C.A.R. by Mackworth-Praed & Grant (1973), and from C.A.R. by Serle & Morel (1977), but we are unaware of firm evidence.

Buphagus erythrorhynchus Red-billed Oxpecker. Region 2; X. Absent from W and west-central Africa (unlike Yellow-billed *B. africanus*); its occurrence in southern C.A.R. appears unlikely.

Passeridae

Petronia pyrgita Yellow-spotted Petronia. Region 1; X. Known no nearer than E Chad and E Sudan (Salvan 1969, Nikolaus 1987), and unrecorded from Cameroon; presence in C.A.R. would need confirmation.

Ploceidae

Bubalornis albirostris White-billed Buffalo Weaver. P. Although Dowsett (1993) reported this as resident, based on Carroll (1988), the supporting reference is in fact Mackworth-Praed & Grant (1973). We have not traced the original evidence for this reference, so believe its occurrence remains to be confirmed.

Ploceus insignis Brown-capped Weaver. Region 2; X. Germain (1992) rejected this species from the Lobaye. It was also reported from Bangui (Jehl 1976), but we believe this was probably based on a misidentification (perhaps of *P. preussi*).

P. intermedius Lesser Masked Weaver. Region 1; X. This southern species was listed by Carroll (1988) from Manovo, probably in error.

Quelea cardinalis Cardinal Quelea. Region 2; X. Absent from W and west-central Africa. Records in C.A.R. probably result from confusion with Red-headed Quelea *Q. erythrops*, which is not uncommon.

Estrildidae

Estrilda atricapilla Black-headed Waxbill. Region 5; P. Listed by both Carroll (1988) and Green & Carroll (1991), but easily confused with the widespread Black-crowned Waxbill *E. nonmula*. Germain & Cornet (1994) examined many of the latter in the Bangui area, but found no *E. atricapilla*. According to A.A. Green (pers. comm.), the record of *E. atricapilla* from Bayanga, in south-western C.A.R., may be based on such confusion. However, *E. atricapilla* is present locally in neighbouring parts of west-central Africa, as near as Nouabalé-Ndoki in northern Congo and the Lobéké in SE Cameroon (Dowsett-Lemaire 1997a, Dowsett-Lemaire & Dowsett 1997).

Vidua paradisaea Long-tailed Paradise Widow. Regions 1, 4–6; P. Carroll (1988) reported just one species of paradise widow from C.A.R. (both northern and southern areas), which he called *V. orientalis*, as did Bretagnolle (1993) who worked in the north-east of the country. Payne (1985) had shown that *orientalis* is a subspecies of *V. paradisaea*, while the form known from C.A.R. is now considered a separate species, *V. interjecta*. Most or all of Carroll's records presumably refer to *interjecta*, as could Bretagnolle's (as it ranges into Sudan). However, Blancou (1938–9), a careful observer, believed he could distinguish two forms in C.A.R. and further investigation may well show that *V. paradisaea* also occurs.

Conclusions

The corrections necessary to Carroll's (1988) list show that the avifauna of C.A.R. has not been well documented. No fewer than 56 species reported in the literature for C.A.R. were overlooked by Carroll (1988), many of which appear to be acceptable. These have been detailed above or by Dowsett (1993). Some difficulties are caused by the various names (such as French Equatorial Africa, Oubangui-Chari, eastern Cameroons *etc.*) used to describe the region of which present-day C.A.R. is part.

The number of species now known with certainty from C.A.R. is 698. We believe we have now clarified most of the problems with previous records, but most parts of the country are still poorly explored and documented. This is well shown by the additions to the C.A.R. list documented here from just one small part of the country, and by RJD's finding a dozen species unrecorded from the Bamingui-Bangoran national park during less than 24 hours spent in the neighbouring Sangha hunting area (Dowsett 1997). We urge those who have observations adding to, amending or correcting our own to document them thoroughly in print.

Acknowledgments

Visits to Ngotto by PC and RJD were sponsored by the European Union-funded Ecofac project. We thank Dr. R.W. Carroll for commenting on some points, Dr F. Dowsett-Lemaire and Dr. A.Tye for critical reading, A.A. Green for his valuable comments and communications, J.L. Tello for his unpublished observations, and Mme F. Pelletier, J.-P. Bricard and O. Langrand for help on the internet.

References

- ASH, J.S., DOWSETT-LEMAIRE, F. & DOWSETT, R.J. (1989) New ornithological distribution records from eastern Nigeria. *Tauraco Res. Rep.* 1: 13–27.

- ASPINWALL, D., MOULTON, J.P. & STJERNSTEDT, R. (1995) Record of Solitary Sandpiper in Zambia. *Bull. Afr. Bird Club* 2: 106–107.
- BLANCOU, L. (1938–9) Contribution à l'étude des oiseaux de l'Oubangui-Chari occidental (Bassin supérieur de l'Ouham). *Oiseau Rev. fr. Orn.* 8: 405–430, 642–649; 9: 58–88, 255–277, 410–485.
- BOCAGE, J.V.B. DU (1881) Ornithologie d'Angola. Part 2. Lisbon.
- BOUET, G. (1955–61) *Oiseaux de l'Afrique Tropicale*, vols 1, 2. ORSTOM, Paris.
- BRETAGNOLLE, F. (1993) An annotated checklist of birds of north-eastern Central African Republic. *Malimbus* 15: 6–16.
- BRITTON, P.L. (ed.). (1980) *Birds of East Africa*. East African Natural History Society, Nairobi.
- BROWN, L.H., URBAN, E.K. & NEWMAN, K. (1982) *The Birds of Africa*, vol. 1. Academic Press, London.
- CARROLL, R.W. (1982) *An Ornithological Investigation of the Central African Republic*. M.Sc.thesis, Southern Connecticut State College, New Haven.
- CARROLL, R.W. (1988) Birds of the Central African Republic. *Malimbus* 10: 177–200.
- CHAPIN, J.P. (1953–4) The birds of the Belgian Congo. Parts 3, 4. *Bull. Amer. Mus. Nat. Hist.* 75A: 1–821; 75B: 1–846.
- CHRISTY, P. (1995) *Ornithologie de Ngotto-Bambio*. Unpubl. rep., Groupement Agreco-CTFT, Brussels.
- DOWSETT, R.J. (1980) The migration of coastal waders from the Palaearctic across Africa. *Gerfaut* 70: 3–35.
- DOWSETT, R.J. (1993) Afrotropical avifaunas: annotated country checklists. *Tauraco Res. Rep.* 5: 1–322.
- DOWSETT, R.J. (1997) Birds of interest from the Sangha area, adjacent to the Bamingui-Bangoran National Park, Central African Republic. *Malimbus* 19: 102–103.
- DOWSETT, R.J. & DOWSETT-LEMAIRE, F. (1989) Liste préliminaire des oiseaux du Congo. *Tauraco Res. Rep.* 2: 29–51.
- DOWSETT, R.J. & FORBES-WATSON, A.D. (1993) *Checklist of Birds of the Afrotropical and Malagasy Regions*. Vol. 1. Liège: Tauraco Press.
- DOWSETT, R.J. & KEMP, A.C. (1988) The claimed occurrences of Long-legged Buzzards *Buteo rufinus* in Africa south of the equator. *Gabar* 3: 67–69.
- DOWSETT, R.J. & MOORE, A. (1997) Swamp warblers *Acrocephalus gracilirostris* and *A. rufescens* at Lake Chad, Nigeria. *Bull. Brit. Orn. Club* 117: 48–51.
- DOWSETT, R.J., ASPINWALL, D.R. & LEONARD, P.M. (in press) Further additions to the avifauna of Zambia. *Bull. Brit. Orn. Club*.
- DOWSETT-LEMAIRE, F. (1997a) The avifauna of Odzala National Park, Northern Congo. *Tauraco Res. Rep.* 6: 15–48.
- DOWSETT-LEMAIRE, F. (1997b) The avifauna of Nouabalé-Ndoki National Park, Northern Congo. *Tauraco Res. Rep.* 6: 111–124.

- DOWSETT-LEMAIRE, F. & DOWSETT, R.J. (1991) The avifauna of the Kouilou basin in Congo. *Tauraco Res. Rep.* 4: 189–239.
- DOWSETT-LEMAIRE, F. & DOWSETT, R.J. (1997) Report on a visit to the Lobéké Réserve, Cameroon. Unpubl. rep., WWF-Cameroon, Yaoundé.
- DOWSETT-LEMAIRE, F. & DOWSETT, R.J. (1998) Further additions to and deletions from the avifauna of Congo-Brazzaville. *Malimbus* 20: 15–32.
- FRIEDMANN, H. (1978) Results of the Lathrop Central African Republic Expedition 1976, Ornithology. *Contrib. Sci.* 287: 1–22.
- FRY, C.H. (1984) *The Bee-eaters*. Poyser, Calton.
- FRY, C.H., KEITH, S. & URBAN, E.K. (1988) *The Birds of Africa*, vol. 3. Academic Press, London.
- GERMAIN, M. (1992) Sur quelques données erronées concernant l'avifaune de la Lobaye, République Centrafricaine. *Malimbus* 14: 1–6.
- GERMAIN, M. & CORNET, J.P. (1994) Oiseaux nouveaux pour la République Centrafricaine ou dont les notifications de ce pays sont peu nombreuses. *Malimbus* 16: 30–51.
- GREEN, A.A. & CARROLL, R.W. (1991) The avifauna of Dzanga-Ndoki National Park and Dzanga-Sangha Rainforest Reserve, Central African Republic. *Malimbus* 13: 49–66.
- HALL, B.P. & MOREAU, R.E. (1970) *An Atlas of Speciation in African Passerine Birds*. British Museum (Natural History), London.
- HAYMAN, P., MARCHANT, J. & PRATER, T. (1986) *Shorebirds: an Identification Guide to the Waders of the World*. Croom Helm, London.
- HOCKEY, P.A.R., BROOKE, R.K., COOPER, J., SINCLAIR, J.C. & TREE, A.J. (1986) Rare and vagrant scolopacid waders in southern Africa. *Ostrich* 57: 37–55.
- JEHL, H. (1976) Les oiseaux de l'île de Kembé (R.C.A.). *Alauda* 44: 153–167.
- KEITH, S., BENSON, C.W. & IRWIN, M.P.S. (1970) The genus *Sarothrura* (Aves, Rallidae). *Bull. Amer. Mus. Nat. Hist.* 143: 1–84.
- KEITH, S., URBAN, E.K. & FRY, C.D. (eds) (1992) *The Birds of Africa*, vol. 4. Academic Press, London.
- KEMP, A. (1995) *The Hornbills*. Oxford Univ. Press, Oxford.
- KIESER, J.A. (1980) A Solitary Sandpiper *Tringa solitaria* in South Africa. *Bokmakierie* 32: 124.
- LOUETTE, M. (1981) Birds of Cameroon An annotated check-list. *Verhandel. Kon. Acad. Wetensch. Lett. Schone Kunst. Belg., Kl. Wetensch.* 43(163): 1–295.
- MACKWORTH-PRAED, C.W. & GRANT, C.H.B. (1970–3) *Birds of West Central and Western Africa*. Longman, London.
- NIKOLAUS, G. (1987) Distribution atlas of Sudan's birds with notes on habitat and status. *Bonn. zool. Monogr.* 25: 1–322.
- PAYNE, R.B. (1985) The species of parasitic finches in West Africa. *Malimbus* 7: 103–113.
- PINTO, A.A. DA R. (1983) *Ornitologia de Angola*. Vol. 1. Non-Passerines. Instituto da

- Investigação Científica Tropical, Lisbon.
- QUANTRILL, R. (1995) Red tailed Ant-Thrush *Neocossyphus rufus* in Central African Republic. *Malimbus* 17: 103–104.
- REICHENOW, A. (1911) Die Ornithologischen Sammlungen der Zoologisch-Botanischen Kamerunexpedition 1908 und 1909. *Mitt. Zool. Mus. Berlin* 5: 203–258.
- SALVAN, J. (1968–9) Contribution à l'étude des oiseaux du Tchad. (Parts 2, 4, 5). *Oiseau Rev. fr. Orn.* 38: 53–85, 249–273; 39: 38–69.
- SCHOUTEDEN, H. (1955) De Vogels van Belgisch Congo en van Ruanda-Urundi. VII. *Ann. Mus. Roy. Congo Belge C. Zool.* (4)4: 229–524.
- SERLE, W. & MOREL, G.J. (1977) *A Field Guide to the Birds of West Africa*. Collins, London.
- SNOW, D.W. (ed.) (1978) *An Atlas of Speciation in African Non-Passerine Birds*. British Museum (Natural History), London.
- URBAN, E.K., FRY, C.H. & KEITH, S. (eds) (1986) *The Birds of Africa*, vol. 2. Academic Press, London.
- WHITE, C.M.N. (1962) A check list of the Ethiopian Muscicapidae (Sylviinae). *Occ. Pap. Nat. Mus. S. Rhod.* 26B: 695–738.