



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.

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.

I stress that the inclusion of Fig.1 in Salewski & Korb (2007) is entirely due to my own inattention and not caused by errors of Judith Korb, my co-author.

References

- BORROW, N. & DEMEY, R. (2004) *Birds of Western Africa*. Christopher Helm, London.
- SALEWSKI, V. & KORB, J. (2007) New bird records for Benin. *Malimbus* 29: 42–45.
- URBAN, E.K., FRY, C.H. & KEITH, S. (1997) *The Birds of Africa*, vol. 5. Academic Press, London.

Received 1 August 2007

Revised 18 September 2007

Volker Salewski

Prinz-Rupprecht-Str. 34, 93053 Regensburg, Germany. <salewski.volker@web.de>

Grey-necked Picathartes *Picathartes oreas* use man-made structures to breed

The Grey-necked Picathartes *Picathartes oreas* is well known for its specific nesting requirement: a tall, slightly overhanging rock face, which does not allow rain to fall into the nest (Thompson & Fotso 1995). For example, all nests recorded on Mt Cameroon were on overhanging rock faces (Tye 1987). Nests are constructed either on an isolated rock usually not far from a forest stream, or inside a cave. In addition the rock face has to be high enough to allow the birds to construct the nest at least 2 m from the ground (Fry *et al.* 2000). The only published exceptions are a nest found on the trunk of a tree in Cameroon (Waltert & Mühlenberg 2000) and one in a hollow, cave-like log (Fry *et al.* 2000).

Here we describe two *P. oreas* nest sites under concrete bridges in Lopé National Park, Gabon. The bridges at both sites provide exactly what is required by this species for nesting: smooth vertical walls and the underside of the bridge provide an excellent false cave or rock face.

Both sites were found by accident, Site 1 in 2002 by T. Ukizintambara, who informed PC in 2003, and Site 2 (year unknown) by G. Mabeka, who told FM in 2002. The nest at Site 1 (Fig. 1) was *c.* 75 cm long and 30 cm wide; that at Site 2 (Fig. 2) was shorter (about 40 cm long) and more typical of the species (about as long as it is wide: the exterior is usually 40 cm long and 29 wide (Ash 1991). Exact measurements were not taken as both nests were high up on the faces of the bridges (see hand and head for scale in Figs 1 and 2). The road over the first bridge is a main road used by trucks and other vehicles; the second road is almost never used: perhaps once every year. The vibrations caused by traffic over the first bridge may explain the long, very robust construction of the associated nest. Both bridges are over running

water in very narrow gallery forests in savannas in the northern sector of the Lopé NP. For the first site, access to the nest is easy from both sides, whereas for the second, access from the upstream side is blocked by vegetation.

We do not know how successful these sites are in comparison to nests at natural rock face sites, but they have been used for several years. It is possible that *P. oreas* regularly makes nests under such constructions, but that no-one has thought to look. This is good news for the species, as it means that their nesting opportunities are broader than previously supposed.



Fig 1. Site 1.

Fig 2. Site 2.

Thanks to the Conseil National des Parcs Nationaux and the Ministère des Eaux et Forêts, Gabon. We are grateful to Guy Mabeka of Malouma village and Tharcisse Ukizintambara for passing on this information to us.

References

ASH, J.S. (1991) The Grey-necked Picathartes *Picathartes oreas* and Ibadan Malimbe *Malimbus ibadanensis*. *Bird Conserv. Internat.* 1: 93–106.

- FRY, C.H., KEITH, S. & URBAN, E.K., ed. (2000) *The Birds of Africa*, vol. 4. Academic Press. London.
- THOMPSON, H.S. & FOTSO, R. (1995) Rockfowl: the genus *Picathartes*. *Bull Afr. Bird Club* 2: 25–28.
- TYE, H. (1987) Breeding biology of *Picathartes oreas*. *Gerfaut* 77: 313–32.
- WALTERT, M. & MÜHLENBERG, M. (2000) A nest of Grey-necked *Picathartes oreas* constructed on a tree. *Bull. Afr. Bird Club* 7: 132.

Received 13 April 2007

Revised 31 July 2007

Patrice Christy¹ & Fiona Maisels²

¹BP 2240, Libreville, Gabon

²Wildlife Conservation Society, BP 7847, Libreville, Gabon

Seabird counts at N’Gor, Senegal, in November 2006

During a visit to Senegal in 2006 we spent seven days (10–14 and 25–26 Nov) at N’Gor on the north end of the Cap Vert peninsula to watch the migration of seabirds. We mostly observed from north of Dakar airport, close to N’Gor island, with a view to the north which gave reasonably good views of the WSW-migrating seabirds, even when the winds were moderate. During 10 Nov we counted Cory’s Shearwaters *Calonotris diomedea* passing per minute in different periods; on the other days we counted all passing birds. The mornings were mostly clear and good numbers of seabirds passed within 1000 m, with the first two hours the best of the day. As the day proceeded, the visibility and greater distance to the birds made it less profitable to watch. The evenings were also good, especially on 25 Nov when the wind was more from the north than northeast and with wind speed exceeding 10 ms⁻¹. Observations are summarized in Table 1.

Many Cory’s Shearwaters passed southwest during days with northeast winds, with means of 50 per min. in the morning and 10–15 in the afternoon. On several occasions we had >100 per min. in the morning and some flocks of several hundreds passing. A low estimate of the number of Cory’s Shearwater passing N’Gor during 10 Nov is at least 15000 birds. We did not observe any Cape Verde Shearwaters *C. (diomedea) edwardsii*, despite close attention. The prevailing northeast winds might have prevented them from reaching the coast during the period, or they might not occur regularly at this season. The number of migrating Cory’s Shearwater peaks at the Cap Vert peninsula in Nov, with the largest number reported being 3146 in 1 h, in Nov 1991 (Sauvage & Rodwell 1998). Our 4500 birds in 1h 20 min. on 10 Nov therefore a new highest count.

The observations of Great Shearwater *Puffinus gravis*, a rarely observed passage migrant (Brown *et al.* 1982, Sauvage & Rodwell 1998, Borrow & Demey 2004),