

result of illegal hunting. As mentioned by them shotgun cartridges were easily found on the trails and shotguns were occasionally heard, particularly at night.

***Terpsiphone viridis* African Paradise Flycatcher.** A female seen on the Camp Erin nature trail on 1 and 3 Dec proved to be this species rather than Red-bellied Paradise Flycatcher *T. rufiventor*. Two birds were seen in degraded forest at Omo Bridge on 3 Dec; one was a white phase male.

***Platysteira cyanea* Common Wattle-eye.** A male was seen in a mixed feeding party on the trail into Camp Erin on 1 Dec.

The number of species usually associated with degraded forest or forest margins, which I saw deep in the forest close to Camp Erin, was notable, including these last two species. These may just be cases of dry season wandering, but perhaps reflect the slow encroachment of people into the forest, as mentioned by Olmos & Turshak (2009).

I am grateful to the trustees of the Whitley Wildlife Conservation Trust and Paignton Zoo for their continued support for the zoo's efforts to provide an environmental education service in and around the forest. Phil Hall provided good birding advice and Sue Lowe and Helen Wade were excellent travelling companions. Roger Wilkinson's encouragement led me to prepare this note.

References

- ELGOOD, J.H., HEIGHAM, J.B., MOORE, A.M., NASON, A.M., SHARLAND, R.E. & SKINNER, N.J. (1994) *The Birds of Nigeria: an annotated checklist*. Checklist 4, 2nd ed., British Ornithologists' Union, Tring.
- GREEN, A.A., HALL, P. & LEVENTIS, A.P. (2007) Avifauna of Omo Forest Reserve, SW Nigeria. *Malimbus* 29: 16–30.
- OLMOS, F. & TURSHAK, L.G. (2009) A survey of birds in Omo Forest Reserve, south west Nigeria *Bull. Afr. Bird Club* 16: 184–196.

Received 6 June 2011

Simon Tonge

Whitley Wildlife Conservation Trust, Paignton Zoo Environmental Park,
Totnes Rd, Paignton TQ4 7EU, Devon, U.K. <simon.tonge@paigntonzoo.org.uk>

Blue-breasted Kingfisher *Halcyon malimbica* feeding at sea

The Blue-breasted Kingfisher *Halcyon malimbica* is largely a bird of forest and dense woodland. It often occurs in riparian vegetation along streams and rivers, and ventures into coastal mangroves, but is not generally known to feed on the open coastline (Fry *et al.* 1988, Fry *et al.* 1992, Borrow & Demey 2001). Christy & Clark (1998) report

how the large subspecies *H. m. dryas*, endemic to Príncipe Island in the Gulf of Guinea, forages along the south coast of the island, but provide scant information on its foraging behaviour in this unusual habitat.

On 1 August 2011, I observed a Blue-breasted Kingfisher feeding along the exposed, rocky coastline of southwest Príncipe. The bird spent at least 20 min. perched on the sides of large boulders, 1–2 m above the sea, sallying forth to take prey from wave-washed rocks. One perch was on an isolated boulder some 30 m offshore. During the 20-min. observation period, the kingfisher made eight attempts to catch prey. It was successful twice, picking up small prey items in flight and immediately returning to its perch where it battered what appeared to be small crabs against the rock before swallowing them. Several attempts failed when waves washed over the target area; the kingfisher never touched the water, and aborted any attempt when there was a risk of getting wet. Other attacks apparently failed because the prey detected the approaching bird. All attacks were made low over the water, possibly to reduce the chance of detection. This impression was reinforced by the fact that the kingfisher was never observed to sit on top of a boulder, perhaps to avoid being silhouetted against the sky. Its perches were so low that on one occasion it was flushed by a breaking wave.

Blue-breasted Kingfishers occur in a wider range of habitats on Príncipe Island than on the mainland (Christy & Clark 1998, Leventis & Olmos 2009). Their apparently broader foraging niche (including using anvils to smash open snail shells: Leventis & Olmos 2009) is consistent with ecological theory, given the island's depauperate avifauna (Jones & Tye 2006). By foraging in marine habitats, the Príncipe population might increase its ability to cross marine barriers; several individuals were observed on Ilhéu Carço (Boné de Joquei), a small, vegetated islet 2 km off the southeast coast of Príncipe, during a brief visit on 30–31 July 2011. However, they are confirmed to occur on only one of the four main Gulf of Guinea islands (Jones & Tye 2006). Interestingly, the local form of Malachite Kingfisher, *Alcedo cristata nais* (see Melo & Fuchs 2008) was also observed on Ilhéu Carço on 30 July, apparently the first record from this location (Jones & Tye 2006).

References

- BORROW, N. & DEMEY, R. (2001) *Birds of Western Africa*. Christopher Helm, London.
- CHRISTY, P. & CLARKE, W.V. (1998) *Guide des oiseaux de São Tomé et Príncipe*. ECOFAC, São Tomé.
- FRY, C.H., KEITH, S. & URBAN, E.K. (1988) *The Birds of Africa*, vol. 3. Academic Press, London.
- FRY, C.H., FRY, K. & HARRIS, A. (1992) *Kingfishers, Bee-eaters and Rollers: a handbook*. Christopher Helm, London.
- JONES, P. & TYE, A. (2006) *The Birds of São Tomé and Príncipe, with Annobón, islands of the Gulf of Guinea*. British Ornithologists' Union, Oxford.

- LEVENTIS, A.P. & OLMOS, F. 2009. *The Birds of São Tomé e Príncipe: a photoguide*. Aves & Fotos Editora, São Paulo.
- MELO, M. & FUCHS, J. (2008) Phylogenetic relationships of the Gulf of Guinea *Alcedo* kingfishers. *Ibis* 150: 633–639.

Received 16 August 2011; revised 5 September 2011

Peter G. Ryan
Percy FitzPatrick Institute of African Ornithology, University of Cape Town,
Rondebosch 7701, South Africa <pryan31@gmail.com>

Occurrence of two common forest bird species in Amurum Forest Reserve on the Jos Plateau, Nigeria

Amurum Forest Reserve on the Jos Plateau (9°53'N, 8°59'E) covers 300 ha of mostly savannah scrubland, gallery forest and inselbergs (rocky outcrops) (Ezealor 2002) and lies at 1300 m above sea level. Most rain occurs from around May to August, while the dry season is between October and March, with an average rainfall of 1400 mm per year; temperature range is 20–25 °C (< 10 °C in extreme cases) during the coldest months and 30–35 °C during warm and dry months (Payne 1998). Although the reserve is protected, much of the surrounding vegetation has been cleared for farmland and high levels of cattle and goat grazing occurs around the periphery. The core of the reserve faces continued loss of standing trees through fuelwood collection, as well as illegal setting of fires, gully erosion, and invasion by *Lantana camara*. In spite of this, gallery forests surrounding seasonal streams, which form parts of the fragmented system of lush gullies that extended into the Jos Plateau and other savannah areas, still persist and are likely acting as biological corridors for species movements (Seaman & Schulze 2010). The A.P. Leventis Ornithological Research Institute (APLORI) has monitored the avifauna since 2001, so immigration of new species can be detected.

On 10 Oct 2006, a Yellowbill *Ceuthmochares aereus* was caught in a mist net in a relatively open area of savannah scrub in the reserve (Fig. 1). On 9 Feb 2007, 10 Mar 2007 and 21 Mar 2011 Little Greenbuls *Andropadus virens* were caught in mist nets in gallery forest (Fig. 2) and on 30 Jun 2011, a song of this species was heard from the gallery forest close to one of the capture sites.

Both are widespread, common, generalist foragers that prefer forest edge and disturbed habitat (Fry *et al.* 1988, Keith *et al.* 1992), and are able to breed in degraded forest. Conversion of primary to secondary forest has been shown to result in an increase in population size of the Little Greenbul (Kofron & Chapman 1995; Smith *et al.* 2008), but with negative consequences for individual fitness (Smith *et al.* 2008). Previously, the nearest records of both species were 62 km from Amurum at Kurra Falls forest in