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NEW RECORDS FOR THE LAMTO REGION, IVORY COAST - The avifauna of the region of the Station d'Ecologie Tropicale de Lamto (05°02'W, 06°13'N), Ivory Coast, has been listed by Thiollay (*Ann. Univ. Abidjan, Sér. E, Ecologie* 4, 1971: 5-132). During visits there in July-September 1981 and 1982 I saw two species new to the region. An Openbill *Anastomus lamelligerus* was seen on 29 August 1982 circling over the Station with a White-necked Stork *Ciconia episcopus* (itself usually just a casual visitor from October to April). In Ivory Coast the Openbill is described by Brunel & Thiollay (*Alauda* 37, 1969: 230-254) as "très rare. Dans l'extrême Nord en mai-juin".

On 8 August 1981 I saw a single Bare-headed Rock-fowl *Picathartes gymnocephalus* in riverine forest some 300 m from the Station and in almost exactly the same place again on 1 September 1982. My impression was of a yellow- and bald-headed, scrawny-necked, long-legged bird somewhat recalling a Magpie *Pica pica*, essentially black above and white below and with a deep and stout rather crow-like bill. On seeing me the bird on each occasion showed surprising agility as it disappeared through the undergrowth by a combination of hopping along the ground and from one low branch to another. On the first occasion I disturbed it as it was pecking on the ground, there lightly covered with leaf-litter. No calls were heard. For the country as a whole Brunel & Thiollay (*Alauda* 37, 1969: 315-337) note only "une petite colonie dans le biotope caractéristique de l'espace au pied du Mont Nimba: amoncellement de gros rochers moussus formant des auvents en sous-bois de forêt primaire". At Lamto such habitat does not exist. Whether each bird (if two individuals) was nevertheless breeding or whether a seasonal migrant to Lamto, can only be speculated upon (Nimba is some 300 kms away). The secretive nature of the species is evinced by the fact that, in a place well crossed by paths and very frequently visited, there were no further encounters.

H.D.V. Prendergast

Taxonomy Unit, Research School of Biological Sciences, Australian National University, Box 475 P.O., Canberra, A.C.T. 2601 Australia

ON NESTING OF THE LAVENDER FIRE-FINCH - The nest of the Lavender Fire-finch *Estrilda caerulescens* does not seem to have been described. There are several reports from The Gambia of it with nesting material in August and September, (*Notes on the Birds of The Gambia*, D. Bray, J. Mullholland & A. Vittery, 1966, with additions by O. Andrews & T.V. Sims, 1969, Govt. Printer, Bathurst) and also August 1980 at Fajara (personal record). In August 1981 I found five nests being built in our garden at Fajara, three in citrus trees and two in ornamental shrubs. They were untidy woven domes 20 cms in diameter, built in forks of the trees, constructed of seeding heads of grasses. The entrance, on one side, was a spout 5 cms long and 3.5 cms in diameter, pointing downward.

Three birds collected grasses from the same place, each flew off to add them to individual nests. Building continued throughout August. One nest was destroyed in a heavy rainstorm and the other four were abandoned and derelict by mid-September. There was no evidence of breeding in any of the nests. I have a record of a party of *E. caerulescens* roosting in an old sunbird's nest six weeks later. In August 1982 three nests (one uncompleted) were built in the same garden but again there was no evidence of breeding. (I am indebted to Mr Steve Tulloch for this record.) Birds were recorded in parties of 6 or 8 at Fajara throughout the year, but I have no record of any bird resembling a fledgling amongst them.

Amberley Moore