



West African Ornithological Society
Société d'Ornithologie de l'Ouest
Africain



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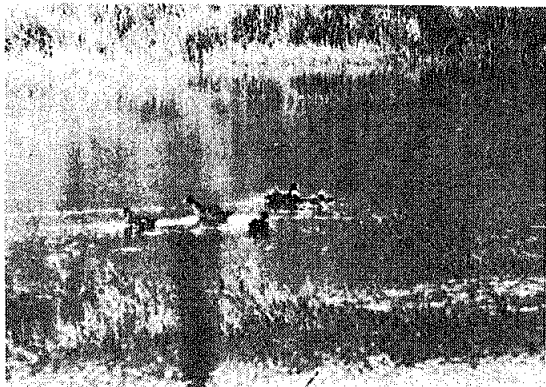
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FIRST YELLOW-BILLED DUCK RECORD FOR NIGERIA - This photograph of five Yellow-billed Ducks Anas undulata was taken by Chris Pearson on Mambilla Plateau, Nigeria, "about 1978", and was brought to my attention through the good offices of R.E. Sharland. The original is a colour print and shows clearly the bright yellow bills of all five birds, as well as other plumage features which make the identification unquestionable. The only previous West



African record is of one specimen from Vina River, Cameroon (Monard, 1951, cited by M. Louette, 1981, The Birds of Cameroon an Annotated Check-List, and mapped by Snow, 1978, An Atlas of Speciation in African Nonpasserine birds). Otherwise the species is unknown west of a line between north Ethiopia and west Angola. There are two 'good' races, differentiated on bill colour and some plumage features; but the race of the Mambilla birds cannot be safely determined from the photo. In southern Africa the species is somewhat migratory, with the most distant recovery of 1100 km; but whether the Mambilla (and Cameroon) birds are resident or migrants is open to question.

C.H. Fry

LITTLE EGRETS AND REEF HERONS HOVERING —

On 19 May 1985 I was watching a group of herons feeding quietly on a tidal mudflat in the lagoon of Abidjan. Species included Great White Egret Egretta alba (1), Yellow-billed Egret E. intermedia (2), Little Egret E. garzetta (11), Reef Heron E. gularis (13) and Grey Heron Ardea cinerea (1 imm). Suddenly a Little Egret started hovering over the shallow water of the lagoon, stabbing at small fish below. Its example was immediately followed by other Little Egrets as well as by Reef Herons. Sometimes while hovering their feet were trailing in the water and one Reef Heron even lowered itself slowly into the water, up to the belly, without touching ground. After a while up to three E. garzetta and five E. gularis were foraging this way. They were still doing so when I left half an hour later.

I pass this mudflat twice a day on my way to work for several years now and I regularly go counting and watching birds there, but it was the first and only time I observed this behaviour, so I suppose it is not common. Hancock and Kushlan (1984, The Herons Handbook) state that the feeding techniques used by the Little Egret are highly variable and they mention some often used 'active' techniques, but no mention is made of hovering. Brown, Urban and Newman (1982, The Birds of Africa, vol 1) do not mention hovering behaviour either.

Ron Demeý
PNUD, 01 BP 1747, Abidjan 01, Ivory Coast

TWO NEW SPECIES FOR IVORY COAST - Since publication of J.M. Thiollay's Birds of Ivory Coast (Malimbus 7: 1-59) I have seen two new species, bringing to 685 the number of species of this country.

European Turtle-dove Streptopelia turtur
A party of about six seen in the South of Comoe National Park (near Ganse) on 10 Feb 1985 (observation made with Jan Van de Voorde).

Reichenbach's Sunbird Nectarinia reichenbachii
One near Dabou (coast) on 23 June 1985 in shrubs bordering ricefields. The bird was at exactly the same spot on three subsequent visits to the area on 30 June, 3 August and 28 September. At each visit an excellent view was obtained, the bird not being shy and sitting for long stretches on end on the same twig and always returning to it after short flights. The bright yellow of lower belly and undertail coverts was conspicuous. A sighting on 13 July 1980 in Abidjan (in some palms on the golfcourse, at that time still under construction) was almost certainly of the same species.

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JOHANNA'S SUNBIRD IN NIGERIA - Sabon Gida Akwanwe village lies in southern Gongola State, Nigeria, near the Mambilla Plateau, at 06°45'N, 11°00'E. The area is hilly (elevation c. 500 m), with large patches of lowland rain-forest interspersed with thick guinea savanna bush and plots of farmland. The village is 15 km from the Cameroun border, which here follows the upper Donga River. On 18 Sept 1985 I watched several species of forest birds there, including a Spotted Honeyguide Indicator maculatus eating caterpillars, and a male Johanna's Sunbird Nectarinia johannae. It had metallic green head, throat and back, non-metallic dark red breast, and black wings and tail. The only previous record in Nigeria was at Lagos in 1951.

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RINGING IN NIGERIA 1985 - No ringing was carried out in Nigeria in 1985, but six foreign-ringed birds were reported. Full details of two of these have been received (Schedule 1).

Of 38 White Storks Ciconia ciconia controlled in Nigeria since 1962, all but four were caught by trappers near Nguru using live storks as