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Société d'Ornithologie de l'Ouest
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Bouvier's Orange-tufted Sunbird Cinnyris bouveri. 1 ♂, 1 ♀ netted.
Not uncommon.

Preuss's Double-collared Sunbird Cinnyris reichenowi spp. 1 ♂. The
commonest sunbird.

Burton's Black-and-yellow Bishop Euplectes capensis phoenicomera. 1 ♂,
2 ♀. Abundant. In off-season plumage.

Black-crowned Waxbill Estrilda nonnula. Fairly common. I did not come
across the Lower Guinea E. atricapilla the range limit of which is
near here.

Common Waxbill Estrilda astrild. 5 netted.

Orange-cheeked Waxbill Estrilda melpoda. 6 netted. Both of these
estrildines were much in evidence in the evenings. The strong wind
during the day kept birds down and away from the nets.

Sight records. A complete list of the species seen has been deposited
with the Editor. These include a number of species widespread in sav-
annah, e.g. Rock Bunting Fringillaria tahapisi and Double-spurred
Francolin Francolinus bicalcaratus; widespread Palaearctic immigrants
e.g. Whinchat Saxicola rubetra and European Swallow Hirundo rustica;
and birds which occur over the whole montane system, e.g. Stonechat
Saxicola torquata (grassland) and Blue Fairy Flycatcher Erannornis
longicauda (fringing forest). Some interesting records are :

Rüppell's Griffon Gyps rüppellii. 2 or 3.

White-backed Vulture Pseudogyps africanus. Common

Common Vulture Necrosyrtes monachus. Common.

Niger Mourning Dove Streptopelia decipiens. Frequent. Apart from the
Laughing Dove Stigmatopelia senegalensis and a wood-dove Turtur sp.
this was the only species seen.

Mountain Stonechat. Abundant.

West African Fiscal Shrike Lanius collaris. 3 or 4.

Oxpecker Buphagus africanus. Seemed to prefer horses to cattle!

References

- / 129-137.
- (1) Peal, J. (1961) Local leave on Mambila Plateau. Nigerian Field 26 :
(2) Hepper, F.N. (1962) A botanist in Adamawa. Pts. I & II. Nigerian
Field 27 : 54-78 & 100-122.

NOTES

Birds of the Plateau Province - Additions. With reference to the
'Provisional Check-List of the Birds of Plateau Province over 3,000 ft.
by Ebbutt et al (Bull. N.O.S. 3 : 9) there are two possible additions
Both were reported to me by other people and there is some doubt as to
the exact locality in which the birds were found, but both are very
interesting extensions in range of forest species.

In June 1957 Mr H. Sassoon brought me the body of a Narina Trogon
that he had picked up on the Bauchi-Jos road; it was identified by

British Museum (Nat. Hist.) as Apaloderma narina brachyurum. I have subsequently seen this bird near Azare, and Philip Blasdale has reported it near Potiskum.

P Blasdale also reported Pygmy Flycatchers Alseonax minimus as being present in the Ruriwai area just off the Jos/Zaria road. Unfortunately no skins were procured to establish the race.

I have records of an additional species which can positively be added to the Plateau list. On 6th May 1952 I saw an African Blue Quail Excalfactoria adansoni near Sabon Gida Dan, and on 7th June 1960 I saw three birds of this species in practically the same place.

R.E. Sharland.

Red-necked Kestrel Falco chiquera hunting bats. For eight successive evenings until the time of writing (18th January 1965) I and others have watched a pair of Red-necked Kestrels taking bats shortly after their emergence from houses on the Ahmadu Bello University campus, Zaria. On each one of these evenings, one or both birds have been seen either striking at or carrying in the talons a bat, and I have seen the actual mid-air strike three or four times now.

The bats are of one or two fairly small species, up to 10" or 12" wingspread, and emerge from the eves en masse about 15 minutes after the sun sets. At about the time of emergence, or a few minutes before, i.e. about 1830 hrs., the falcons appear and sit quietly waiting on one of two or three favourite tree-top perches. No sooner do the bats emerge than the falcons set off in pursuit in fast powerful flight usually about tree-top level, but rising if necessary to one or two hundred feet. Just before the falcon closes on it, the bat takes avoiding action and as often as not escapes; although I had the impression that the birds sometimes do not try too hard. Once a bat was caught, held in the talons for a few seconds and then released. Having captured its prey, the kestrel makes off and doubtless perches to consume it. The performance is over by 1840 hrs.

Cave & MacDonald (Birds of the Sudan) say that the Red-necked Kestrel is a "courageous little falcon usually seen dashing after prey at breakneck speed." In the best tradition of the genus Falco, it certainly is a bold and fast flier, and habitually takes prey on the wing - weaver-birds, swifts and doves (Bannerman, 1954), and also grasshoppers, locusts and termites (Roberts, The Birds of South Africa, who also records rats and lizards in the diet). Mackworth-Praed & Grant (African Handbook of Birds) say that this kestrel is active at dusk, and I would venture to suggest that the falcon which Macgregor reported seeing catching bats at Kaduna (Bull. N.O.S. 3: 15) was not a Hobby F. subbuteo but the present species F. chiquera.

C.H. Fry