



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



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Nigerian Recovery of American Sooty Tern. A Sooty Tern Sterna fuscata ringed at Bush Key, Dry Tortugas, Florida on 22nd June 1964 was recovered at Benin Airport on or about 31st January 1965. (Recovery data : Nigerian Daily Times; ringing data : U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service).

Editor

Opportunism Feeding by Senegal Coucal. Our compound has been inhabited by a pair of Senegal Coucals Centropus senegalensis for several years; they nested in 1964 about 7 feet above the ground in a large mixed Oleander Nerium indicum and Allamanda Allamanda cathartica bush. I have observed them chasing lizards along tree branches, and on 12th February 1965 I saw one catch a half-grown female Agama lizard Agama agama with its beak, hammer it several times on the ground and then swallow it whole head first. On 26th February 1965 a coucal was seen leaping up and down under a mist-net suspended in the compound; on my approach the coucal retreated into a bush some two yards away. Caught in the net I found a female Red-checked Cordon-bleu Uraeginthus bengalus, and on examination I found it was dead without apparent injury. All this time the coucal had been watching me from the nearby bush, so I threw the dead cordon-bleu on the ground in front of the coucal, which immediately left the bush, took the dead bird in its beak and flew off. On 1st March 1965 a coucal was caught by one leg only at the bottom of the net which was in the same situation as on the previous occasion. Some 18" above the coucal a female Senegal Combassou Hypochoera chalybeata was caught, and on examination I found it had a fresh shallow wound on the side of its neck, which, in my opinion, had been made by the beak of the coucal. The fact that the coucal itself got caught no doubt saved the combassou from a fate similar to that of the cordon-bleu.

I have seen several reports of coucals taking nestlings of small birds, and Lynes reported that when collecting Redd Warblers in the papyrus swamps of Darfur he had difficulty in retrieving his specimens before the coucals made off with them (Bannerman, D.A., 1933, Birds of Tropical West Africa, Vol. III p.132), but I have not seen any record of attacks on live adult birds, immobilised or otherwise.

Jacqueline F. Brotherton

The Plumage of Immature Black-throated Honey-guides. The shorter Bannerman (1953), which is doubtless in much wider possession than the 8 volume work, says of the immature Black-throated Honey-guides Indicator indicator that they 'resemble (the adult female) but have the throat and breast pale yellow', a statement which is frankly misleading for a plumage phase which is so diagnostic and different from the adult of both sexes that the immature bird was originally described as a distinct species.

On 6th March 1965 I purchased a live immature I. indicator which had just been caught on the outskirts of Zaria. The identity of the