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- (1) Bannerman, D.A. (1953) The Birds of West and Equatorial Africa. Vol. 2. Edinburgh
- (2) Serle, W. (1957) A contribution to the ornithology of the Eastern Region of Nigeria. Ibis 99 : 371-418 & 628-685.

SOME NOTES ON THE BIRDS OF TIVLAND

H.H. Gray

Since November 1953 I have been living in the Tiv Division of Benue Province for extended periods of time (2½ years each, followed by six months' leave) as follows : 1953-'55 at the Leprosy Settlement, Mkar (7° 20' N., 9° 02' E.), near Gboko; 1957 at Lupwe and Takum (7° 15' N., 10° 00' E.) in Wukari Division; 1958-'61 again at Mkar. Since November 1961 I have been stationed at Mbaakon, 37 miles South of Gboko. Here I am doing rural health work and so travel each month to various places in the southern areas of Tiv Division. The countryside is rolling, rising in the southernmost part to mountains up to 3,000 ft. elevation. The vegetation is Southern Guinea Savannah. At the very southern edge, contiguous with Obudu Division of Ogoja Province, and Mamfe Overseas District of West Cameroun, the forest begins. Gallery forest extends further North along the banks of some rivers.

The following notes touch on what are considered the more interesting of my observations in the area :

Abdim's Stork Sphenorhynchus abdimii Visits Wukari town (7° 52' N., 9° 48' E.) each wet season, according to local informants. Several were seen there in June 1954.

Sacred Ibis Threskiornis aethiopicus One at a stream near Naa, 45 miles South of Gboko, December 1953.

Grey Kestrel Falco ardosiaceus A few throughout the year at Mbaakon.

African Hawk-Eagle Hieraetus fasciatus One was seen in June 1954 trying to snatch a domestic duck from a compound at Zaki Biam, 50 miles E.N.E. of Gboko on the Wukari road.

Grey-breasted Helmet Guinea-Fowl Numida meleagris Common in less densely populated districts where there is plenty tree cover.

Denham's Bustard Neotis denhami A few in the dry season just West of Gboko, 1960. Two seen at Aku, 20 miles South of Gboko in December 1964. Noted at Takum in Wukari Division in January 1958.

African Button-Quail Turnix sylvatica Common in cultivated areas in fallow grass fields. Heard calling mostly in the dry season until May; only rarely heard in the rains.

Long-tailed Dove Oena capensis A few in the dry season, 1954, at the Leprosy Settlement, Mkar.

Tambourine Dove Tympanistra tympanistra One was captured near Lupwe in December 1954.

Yellow-bellied Fruit-Pigeon Vinago waalia Two noted 9 miles West of Gboko, June 1954.

Green Fruit-Pigeon Vinago australis A few at Mbaakon, December 1964 and July 1965. Several feeding in wild fig trees at Jato Akua (6° 50' N., 9° 30' E.) on 28th January 1965.

Long-tailed Parrakeet Psittacula krameri Two young birds, all dark green and with short tails, were brought in February 1965. By June they were developing long tails.

Red-headed Love-bird Agapornis pullaria At Jato Akaa on 29th January 1965. Also noted in other southeastern parts of Tiv Division, and in Wukari Division.

Gold Coast Touraco Turacus persa One at the Leprosy Settlement, Mkar, April 1954.

Standard-winged Nightjar Macrodipteryx longipennis Males in brooding plumage on the roads from June until September.

Pennant-winged Nightjar Cosmetornis vexillarius One seen at Gboko, July 1954.

Carmine Bee-eater Merops nubicus Widespread from November to April.

White-throated Bee-eater Aerops albicollis Common in the dry season, some remaining until June.

Grey Hornbill Lophoceros nasutus Common and widespread.

Allied Hornbill Lophoceros semifasciatus Only at Abwa, Mbaduku (near Obudu) and other extreme southern areas near Mamfe Overside border of Tiv Division.

Ground Hornbill Bucorvus abyssinicus One in captivity at Mkar, 1954, had been captured at Wukari.

Yellow Flycatcher Chloropeta natalensis A few in the wet season at Mbaakon*.

Senegal Puff-back Flycatcher Batis senegalensis At Mkar in the wet season, 1954. Mbaakon from December 1964 to January 1965; a fledgling brought to me on 20th April 1965. Not common.

Blue Fairy Flycatcher Erannornis longicauda A few in the wet season 1954 at the Leprosy Settlement, Mkar, and along the road between Makurdi and Wannune (7° 34' N., 8° 53' E).

Bell Shrike Laniarius ferrugineus Year-round at Mkar Mt., Mbaakon and Jato Akaa. A nest was found in a 20 ft. Daniella oliveri tree, situated at the junction of two large branches, with the female sitting between 10th February and 7th March 1965.

Long-tailed Shrike Corvinella corvina Common throughout the year on farm-land.

Gladiator Bush-Shrike Malaconotus poliocephalus A pair watched in a Butyrispermum (Shea Butter) tree at Mbaakon on 18th April 1965.

(* Serle (1957) gives his Obudu Plateau as the first for Eastern Region. The present record, for which skin substantiation would be desirable, extends the species to Northern Region and to lowland. It is primarily a woodland savannah species, not montane. -Ed.)

Black-winged Oriole Oriolus nigripennis Occasional at Mkar and Mbaakon.

Amethyst Starling Cinnyricinclus leucogaster Several at Fikyu, near Takum, April 1954.

Pygmy Long-tailed Sunbird Hedydipna platura Several pairs at Jato Akaa in the mission station garden, January 1965. One killed by flying into the house wall was examined in the hand. Not noted in a visit there one month later.

Copper Sunbird Cinnyris cupreus A few at the Leprosy Settlement, Mkar, in wet season 1954 and 1955. Never seen at Mbaakon.

Splendid Sunbird Cinnyris coccinigaster A year-round resident at Mbaakon. Heard at Mkar in June 1965.

Yellow-bellied Sunbird Cinnyris venustus At Mkar, wet season 1954 and 1955. One at Mkar in July 1965. Never seen at Mkaakon.

Yellow-fronted Canary Serinus mozambicus A few at Mbaakon and Mkar.

Village Weaver Plesiositagra cucullatus Apparently seasonal; they arrived at Mbaakon on 10th March 1965, nested in June and July. In 1964 they left in early November.

Fire-crowned Bishop Euplectes hordacea
Orange Bishop E. orix Both in evidence in the wet season on farms; perhaps the former is more abundant.

Red-cheeked Cordon-bleu Uraeginthus bengalus A few at the Leprosy Settlement, Mkar, in February and March 1954. I was informed that these birds are occasionally captured at Takum in Wukari Division. I have never seen them as far South as Mbaakon.

Reference

Serle, W. (1957) A contribution to the ornithology of the Eastern Region of Nigeria. Ibis 99 : 371-418 & 628-685.

THE BIRDS OF ZARIA. III - RESIDENTS, VAGRANTS AND CHECK-LIST (NON-PASSERINES)

C.H. Fry

III. Residents, Vagrants and Check-list (Non-Passerines). Since the first two parts of this article were written (I - African Migrants; II - Palaearctic Migrants) I have learned a good deal more - especially about seasonal distribution - about the birds of the Zaria area through having spent my first wet season here. The list which follows is an annotated check-list of the birds in which the African and Palaearctic migrants are included in systematic order without comment except where a major amendment to the status or distribution given in Parts I and II is necessary. Minor additions and corrections will be given in a subsequent paper after the completion of this series.