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likely to be a seasonal range extension rather than a complete population movement.

Finally both Vidua macroura and Steganura orientalis have been regarded as migrants, though here again the likely explanation is that the donning of an eclipse plumage has made the species inconspicuous. Nevertheless, dated records from all over Nigeria will be of value.

In conclusion, it must again be stated that the species mentioned may not be the only ones worth studying. The birds singled out above are those for which evidence has been produced in the past. Amongst those not specifically mentioned there may well be some hitherto unsuspected cases of migration, and there may well be others that have been overlooked by myself in the preparation of this article.

References

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A NEST OF THE VIOLET-BACKED SUNBIRD

F. Walsh

On 9th February 1966, whilst I was watching the nest of a Red-winged Anaplectes Anaplectes melanotis at Fellagi Village (9° 50' N., 4° 43' E.) near the Kainji Dam site in the Kontagora Division of Niger Province, my attention was drawn to a bird I had not previously encountered, which frequently and noisily visited a slender sapling. This bird proved to be a female Violet-backed Sunbird Anthreptes longuemareii, in the initial stages of constructing its nest. The nest at that date consisted of a small pad of fibrous plant material resting on the horizontal stem of a thorny creeper about 18 ft. up in the sapling. The nest tree was in a fairly open position with the ground beneath burnt bare. The area however was generally one of thick bush associated with a wet-season watercourse, and such tricket-loving species as the Oriole-Babbler Hypergerus atriceps and the Grey-headed Bush-shrike Malaconotus poliocephalus were seen there during the dry season.

Nest building continued until at least 22nd February, by which time the nest looked outwardly complete; the female however was still adding material to the outside of the nest in addition to working on the interior. On 25th February the nest was found lying at the foot of the tree having been neatly plucked from its position, torn open and flattened. Green Monkeys Cercopithecus aethiops which were present in the area at the time were thought to be responsible.

The nest was of the usual sunbird shape, flimsy, untidy and without a tail or porch. Its outstanding characteristic was the materials used in its construction. Most of the exterior consisted of dead leaves - small ovate leaves, fragments of larger leaves, and a few fragments and whole leaves from the nest tree itself. In addition to the leaves were large amounts of shredded papery bark, smaller amounts of leaf petioles, and a few grass stems all held together by a large quantity of spiders' webs. The inside of the nest was constructed almost entirely of papery shreds of bark and web, the entrance hole being especially reinforced with web. It was very well camouflaged and looked remarkably similar to one of the clusters of dead leaves which still hung from the nest tree.

The female was observed building on five dates prior to 25th February, her behaviour being essentially the same on each occasion. Nearly every arrival and departure was signalled by a sweet liquid and monotonous flight call of 'quip quip quip', and sometimes she gave a typical sunbird 'cheep' or 'churr'. On 22nd February she was seen to enter the nest on one visit and whilst she was inside the nest it was vigorously vibrated several times as though she were moulding it. Much of the building seemed to consist of anchoring the roof material with web. First the bird clinging upside-down in the entrance hole would reach over the nest to the 'back' of the roof and peck at the roof, then draw its beak across the roof and into the nest, finishing the movement by pecking at the back of the nest. Often it seemed as though the bird were pulling at a thread or anchoring it. On 13th, 15th and 20th February the male visited the nest site, once alone, and twice accompanied by the female. Each time he perched near the nest but took no part in carrying materials or building.

The date of this attempted breeding is of interest especially when considered with the similarly dated breeding record of the Buff-throated Sunbird Chalcomitra adelberti (Fry, 1965, Bull. Niger. Orn. Soc. 2 (7) : 81-82).