



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



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Falcons were seen in the same place on each of two subsequent visits. It is worth noting that contrary to what Bannerman (1953, Birds of West and Equatorial Africa) says, the birds soared a good deal. On 28th May three Cuckoo-Falcons were seen in Dan Gora wood, 55 miles north-east of Zaria just off the Kano road, by N.J. Skinner and myself. I do not know that the species has been encountered previously in the Zaria area.

C.H.Fry

A Forest Kingfisher *Corythornis leucogaster* at Zaria. On 1st May 1967 a White-bellied Kingfisher *Corythornis leucogaster* was caught alive and healthy in a second-floor room at Ahmadu Bello University, Zaria, at about 0600 hrs. It corresponded with the lower Guinea race batesi and weighed 13.2 gms. The White-bellied Kingfisher is at best a rare and local bird (or else one which has been extensively overlooked), which on the basis of the few recent records in the south of Nigeria would appear to qualify as a forest bird, despite Elgood's categorisation of it as 'aquatic' (Provisional check-list of the birds of Nigeria, Bull. Niger. Orn. Soc. 1 (1):13-25 (1963)). The nearest locality to Zaria where the bird has been previously recorded is Warri, 390 miles to the south, so that this remarkable occurrence would seem to be a real case of vagrancy. The previous night there had been a prolonged and severe wind- and rain-storm driving northwards over Zaria, and it is tempting to hypothesise that the bird, conceivably moving as a night migrant over a short distance, had been caught up in a gale and blown several hundred miles to the north during the night. It is quite possible of course that the actual breeding range of the White-bellied Kingfisher extends considerably to the north of the few localities about latitude 6° where it has been recorded in Nigeria hitherto; for instance the species may extend well to the north in riverain forest along the Niger, or it may have a population in the well-developed forest on the southern and south-western edge of the Jos Plateau. Whether, however, this kingfisher is a bird of Lowland Rain Forest or of dense forest-in-savannah, the fact remains that this record is a nice example of the way in which birds of deep forest, which are in nearly ^{all} cases highly sedentary (Moreau, 1966, The Avifaunas of Africa and its Islands) can move or be moved over long distances, and could establish themselves in forest islands a long way from the centre of distribution of the species.

C.H.Fry

European Nightjar at Vom, Plateau. On 20th April 1967 a European Nightjar *Caprimulgus europaeus* was killed by the car in which Dr J. Lang and Dr N. Grant were travelling near Vom, Plateau. Measurements are : wing 200 mm; weight (after 8 days' refrigeration, in a polythene bag) 98 gms. The long wing determines that the bird is of the northern European race C. e. europaeus, which is of very rare occurrence in West Africa. Ed.