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26
Willow Warbler Phylloscopus trochilus: seven trapped in January were all in active moult.

Grey-capped Bush Warbler Apalis caniceps: two seen 15th January (with Major M. Cruikshank and Mr. and Mrs. J. Heigham) and one trapped.

Rufous Grass-warbler Cisticola galactotes: at least ten always present.

European Swallow Hirundo rustica: occasional visitor.

Red-shouldered Cuckoo-shrike Campephaga phoenicea: female in my garden 22nd December.

Woodchat Shrike Lanius senator: one on 6th January.

Barbary Shrike Laniarius barbarus: usually two present.

Black-crowned Tchagra Tchagra senegala: recorded once.

Splendid Glossy Starling Lamprocolius splendidus: the roost of forty or fifty birds continued to be used throughout the period. One pair noted building 19th December. One pair near Kurama Water, Victoria Island, were feeding young on 23rd January. Of the four trapped in January two were in moult. The eyes of this species are variable in colour, from distinctly yellow to white. Bannerman's emphasis on the white eye is misleading.

Yellow-bellied Sunbird Cinnyris venustus: occasionally seen. One trapped 30th January.

Carmelite Sunbird Chalcomitra fuliginosa: regular in small parties.

Olive-backed Sunbird Cyanomitra verticalis: five trapped of which three (17th and 22nd January) were in moult.

Mouse-brown Sunbird Anthreptes gabonica: three trapped of which one was in moult.

Swainson's Spectacled Weaver Hyphanturgus brachypterus: one trapped.

Black-bellied Seedcracker Pirenestes ostrinus: juvenile 22nd January.

Emin's Bush Shrike in Borgu.

by Frank Walsh.

On 15th October, 1965, shortly after my arrival in Nigeria, I saw a bird which I thought was a Red-backed Shrike Lanius collurio near the New Bussa township. Consulting Bannerman (1953) I found that the bird might have been Emin's Bush Shrike Lanius gubernator and that to be certain of identification the rump colour must be noted. On 18th October, 1965 I again saw the bird in the same area of degraded North Guinea savannah, where it generally perched in full view on the tops of shrubs and once on telephone cables by the New Bussa-Kainji road. Again my field notes were inadequate for certain identification. Subsequently, D. Wells (pers. comm.) informed me that he had seen a similar bird which at the time he assumed was collurio, at New Bussa on 3rd September, 1965.

On 23rd August, 1967 again at New Bussa, a pair of small shrikes generally similar to a male collurio were seen. A determined effort was made to see the rump colour and tail pattern but this failed. Nevertheless, identification was satisfactorily made on the basis of the plumage of the female bird. The female was similar in general pattern to the male but had a brownish rather than grey head, duller brown back and whiter underparts. Close range inspection through x8 binoculars failed to show any trace of barring on the upper and underparts. Thus the possibility of the bird being a female or immature collurio may be ruled out.

A pair of birds were again seen in the same area on the 14th and 28th January, 1968. On these occasions close views were not obtained but on the 14th a clear though brief sighting of the rump of a landing bird was made, it was clearly brown rather than grey and appeared paler than the feathers of the back. From the brief glimpses obtained on these dates it was not possible to distinguish the sexes, both birds seemed to have grey heads and similarly toned upper and underparts. Possibly sexual differences are not always clearly marked in this species. It is likely that both January records relate to the same pair of birds, which were very difficult to approach. Mist nets were set for several days after the 28th January but the birds were not subsequently seen.

The birds were heard on several occasions and calls were noted as 'various twitterings and whistles' together with low harsh calls 'zut zut', 'chuz-zoo-wit' and once a low 'chark chark' as a bird landed in a tree.

In his checklist Elgood (1964) records gubernator as a 'Rare Savanna Resident'. Subsequently no writer in the Bulletin has mentioned this species. Bannerman (1953) implies that its distribution is widespread, ranging from Nile Province, Uganda to the Cameroons and Lake Chad. He also cites records from Benin Province and the Cambaga-Salaga district of Ghana. However, Mackworth-Praed and Grant (1960) give no indication of records West of the Cameroons, and Hopson in his lengthy Checklist for Malamfatori does not report it. Clearly much remains to be learnt of the distribution and movements of this attractive little shrike.

References.

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