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ADDITIONAL NOTES ON THE BIRDS  
OF TIV DIVISION, BENUE PROVINCE.

Herman H. Gray.

Since the notes made in 1965 (Bull. Niger. Orn. Soc. Vol. 2 No. 7, Sept. 1965, pp. 66-68), I would like to add some further observations:

Green-backed Heron Butorides striatus.

One seen at forested stream near Zaki Biam, 50 miles E.N.E. of Gboko, June 1965.

White-faced Duck Dendrocygna viduata.

On Katsina Ala River, at Katsina Ala, all year round.

Osprey Pandion haliaetus.

One on upper Katsina Ala River, near Jato Akaa, Turan district (6° 50' N, 9° 30' E) on 21st February, 1968. Local informants knew the bird and its habit of catching fish. They claimed it was a year-round resident and built a great nest in a large tree by the river, the young hatching in December.

Red-tailed Buzzard Buteo auguralis.

Resident in thickly forested areas, southern Tiv (Turan and Ikov districts)

Stone Partridge Ptilopachus petrosus.

A few at Takum, southern Wukari Division. Seen October, 1967.

West African Crowned Crane Balearica pavonina.

A few along Katsina Ala River. One at Jato Akaa, March, 1967, others in swampy areas near Katsina Ala, in rainy season.

White-headed Plover Xiphidiopterus albiceps.

At Katsina Ala River, near Jato Akaa, March, 1967. At Katsina Ala, November, 1967, and Makurdi on Benue River, January, 1961.

Rufous-crowned Roller Coracias naevius.

A few in southern Tiv (Mbaakon, Jato Akaa) and north of Makurdi, November to late February. Last date seen 22nd February, 1968, near Jato Akaa. Not so common as the Abyssinian Roller Coracias abyssinica. Bannerman lists Bida, 9° N, as the southernmost point for C. naevius. Jato Akaa's latitude is 6° 50' N.

Broad-billed Roller Eurystomus afer.

A few near Jato Akaa on 22nd February, 1966. A flock of six suddenly appeared at Mbaakon on 12th March, 1968, on a windy afternoon, hawking for insects above tree-tops.

Grey-headed Kingfisher Halcyon leucocephala.

Katsina Ala River, near Jato Akaa on 21st February, 1968. Frequent in Obudu Division of Ogoja Province in dry season. Also at Takum in February, 1968.

West African Barbet Lybius vieilloti.

Feeding on wild figs at Jato Akaa, 23rd February, 1966.

Oriole Babbler Hypergerus atriceps.

Zaki Biam, November, 1965; Mbaakon N. A. forest, 6th January, 1968.

Spotted Flycatcher Muscicapa striata.

Near Katsina Ala River at Jato Akaa, 21st February, 1968.

Blue Fairy Flycatcher Erannornis longicauda.

A nest almost completed 16th March, 1968, on a slender branch 20ft. above the ground in Mbaakon N. A. forest.

Paradise Flycatcher Tohitrea viridis.

Nest 10 feet above the ground in mango tree with 2 eggs, 20th July, 1967, at Lupwe near Takum.

Roufous-vented Paradise Flycatcher Tchitreca melampyra.

Probably year-round resident (seen April, June and January), Mbaakon N.A. Forrest

White-fronted Black Chat Pentholaca albifrons.

In forested areas of southern Tiv Division (Jato Akaa, also south of Vandeikya).

Snowy-crowned Robin-chat Cossypha niveicapilla.

April to July, a few at Mbaakon; also seen at Takum in July.

Senegal Crombec Sylvietta brachyura.

Southern Tiv Division, November to April (Mbaakon, Jato Akaa).

Green-backed Eremomela Eremomela pusilla.

Year-round resident in southern Tiv Division.

Singing Bush-warbler Cisticola cantans.

Wet season (April-October) in southern Tiv, also Takum.

Moustached Scrub-warbler Melocichla mentalis.

Seen once in swampy rice field 15 miles south of Mbaakon, at Shangbum, on 2nd March, 1967.

West African Prinia Prinia subflava.

At Jato Akaa on 21st February, 1968.

Lesser Striped Swallow Hirundo abyssinica.

Nesting in road embankment in Dura swamp, near Katsina Ala, June, 1965.

Red-shouldered Cuckoo-Shrike Campephaga phoenicea.

A pair completing a cup-shaped nest 30ft high in a tree at Mbaakon near our house 26th May, 1967, but abandoned ten days later. Also seen at Lupwe, near Takum in July, 1967.

Glossy-backed Drongo Dicrurus adsimilis.

Common in forested parts of Tiv Division. In Mbaakon N. A. Forest I saw a pair feeding 2 fledglings on 5th February, 1968.

Long-crested Helmet Shrike Prionops plumata.

Year-round resident in more forested areas (Jato Akaa, also Takum).

Woodchat Shrike Lanius senator.

One female at Jato Akaa on 20th December, 1967.

Gambian Puff-backed Shrike Dryoscopus gambensis.

Year-round resident, southern Tiv Division. Males display to females in March. I have seen one nest in March at Mbaakon, in a tree-fork, 20ft from the ground.

Brubru Shrike Nilaus afer.

At Jato Akaa in dry season. Earliest date 20th December, (1967,) last date 20th March (1967). On 5th June, 1967 I heard its call at Isherev, 21 miles north of Maku Makurdi, but did not see the bird.

Orange-breasted Bush Shrike Chlorophoneus sulfurepectus.

Dry season at Mbaakon, Jato Akaa, December to 16th March (1968)

Gladiator Shrike Malaconotus poliocephalus.

Previously, I had listed this bird in the 1965 notes. On 15th March, 1967, a boy brought me two full-fledged young, caught near Mbaakon. This species appears to be a year-round resident.

White-shouldered Black Tit Melanerpes niger.

A few at Jato Akaa in March, 1966 and March, 1968.

Piapiac Ptilostomus afer.

It seems to occur only near Sevav, on the east bank of Katsina Ala River. I saw it there in July, 1965.

Green White-Eye Zosterops virens.

A pair at Jato Akaa in garden bushes, February, 1967 and 20th December, 1967.

Olive-backed Sunbird Cyanomitra verticalis.

At Mbaakon, in mission station garden, July 1964, April 1968. In the nearby Mbaakon N.A. Forest, Jan, 1968. Apparently an all-year resident, but in the dense forest in the dry season.

Cabanis Bunting Emberiza cabanisi.

Near Jato Akaa on 8th March, 1967.

Swainson's Spectacled Weaver Hyphanturgus brachypterus.

A pair feeding young in a nest 30ft high in a tree vine in Mbaakon N. A. Forest on 16th March, 1968. Also seen in rainy season at Mkar, near Gboko.

Orange-checked Waxbill Estrilda melpoda.

A few at Mbaakon in wet season. One carrying nesting material in July, 1966.

Nigerian Combassou Hypochera nigeriae.

Seems to be rare. One male at Shangbum, 15 miles south of Mnaakon on 16th October, 1965.

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#### PREUSS'S CLIFF SWALLOW Lecythoplastes preussi

##### BREEDING IN WESTERN NIGERIA

R. W. Ashford.

The dam of the new Oyo reservoir, 3 miles west of Oyo, on the Iseyin road is about 200 yards long and 30 feet high. A spillway has been built at the West end, and in the centre, the flushing pipe leads from a tunnel which goes deep into the dam, into what used to be the course of the Awon River. The tunnel is about 10 feet high, and semi-circular in section. The entrance is half blocked by a wall which leaves only the top 5 feet open. In front of the tunnel is the old river bed. This is periodically flooded when the flushing pipe is open. The vegetation has been cleared for over 100 yards around, leaving well kept short grass. With a bit of scrambling it is possible to enter the tunnel and walk along the flushing pipe for about 60 feet.

Besides containing large numbers of dead fish, and very lively wasps Belonogaster species, the tunnel is the home of a colony of Preuss's Cliff Swallows Lecythoplastes preussi. This bird is said by Bannerman (1953) to be rare, and one of the most interesting of its group. It seems not to have been previously recorded from Western Nigeria.

On 14th January, 1968, well over 100 birds were present. They flew in a very compact flock, wheeling round the entrance to the tunnel, when a few would leave or join the group, or flying away high, almost out of sight to hawk for insects. Sometimes the entire flock would disappear into the tunnel. They constantly called with a martin-like "prrrp prrrp", but when alarmed, the whole group went silent and a few individuals called a single loud "pseep". The whole manner of these birds recalled breeding Sand Martins Riparia riparia.

Identification is easy when the birds are behaving and calling in this way, but lone birds might be confused with Red-rumped Swallows Hirundo rufula (not very familiar to me) or even very dirty House Martins Delichon urbica. The wings appear dull dark brown while the back has a bluish sheen. The patch of feathers with white bases on the back is sometimes surprisingly conspicuous. The rump and underparts are very pale pinkish, almost white. The best distinguishing feature, the white tail mirrors, is seen only when a good view is had. I have seen birds at all ranges from 3 feet, but have not been able to see the chestnut patch behind the eye mentioned by Bannerman. Clearly this is not a useful field character. In size and general shape these birds resemble short tailed Ethiopian Swallows Hirudo aethiopica.

Although the reservoir was visited on 19th November, 1967, the Cliff Swallows were not seen until 14th January. Possibly the whole group had moved off temporarily, or they may not yet have arrived. On 14th January, there were about 65 nests