



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



**Join the WAOS and support
the future availability of free
pdfs on this website.**

<http://malimbus.free.fr/member.htm>

If this link does not work, please copy it to your browser and try again.

If you want to print this pdf, we suggest you begin on the next page (2) to conserve paper.

**Devenez membre de la
SOOA et soutenez la
disponibilité future des pdfs
gratuits sur ce site.**

<http://malimbus.free.fr/adhesion.htm>

Si ce lien ne fonctionne pas, veuillez le copier pour votre navigateur et réessayer.

Si vous souhaitez imprimer ce pdf, nous vous suggérons de commencer par la page suivante
(2) pour économiser du papier.

been seen taking any detached pieces and pecking at the nuts left on the frond-bases.

A Grey Kestrel Falco ardiosaceus, present in the University grounds during the dry season of 1967/68 was also seen taking ripe nuts from oil-palm inflorescences on two occasions and eating them. As this has been recorded once before from the same locality some years ago (Wells Bull.N.O.S. 2 : 110) it would seem that this species takes oil-palm nuts more frequently than would be expected of a bird of prey. Black Kites Milvus migrans also have been seen taking oil-palm nuts in the University grounds during the dry season.

Much of the information above has been taken from a more detailed note to be published in Ibis. I suspect the feeding association between the squirrel and bee-eater occurs throughout much of the wintering range of the bird in S.Nigeria and may have been overlooked because of the frequent difficulty of seeing squirrels amongst the bases of the palm fronds. In view of its possible importance in the dry season diet of the bird, I would be interested in hearing of any other records of such an association, together with details of locality, date and frequency.

.....

A LONG-LEGGED BUZZARD Buteo
rufinus IN SOUTHERN NIGERIA.

Antony Pettot.

An immature Long-legged Buzzard Buteo rufinus spent much of the 1967/68 dry season on the farm of Ibadan University. It was first seen on 3rd January, 1968 and thereafter on many occasions until 23rd March. As far as I am aware this is only the second time this species has been recorded for Nigeria. The first was at Malamfatori, Lake Chad by Hopson in December 1964 and January 1965 (Bull.N.O.S. 4 : 15-16). In plumage and habits the bird seen at Ibadan was rather similar to that at Malamfatori but there are a number of small differences and the details, I think, are worth giving fully.

The bird seen at Ibadan was almost inevitably to be seen perched on a small tree, ca. 15 feet high, near the small fish pond of the farm. It roosted in one of two trees, ca. 60 feet and ca. 80 feet high. On one occasion, when kept off its favourite tree by a party of people it spent an hour sitting on ploughed ground of a nearby field. When perched it allowed a close approach of 20-40 yards, sometimes nearer, before flying off low to another tree. It was never seen to hunt or eat, although it must have done so, and its generally lethargic nature made it a rather dull bird to watch (and an easy one to overlook). On all occasions it was possible to compare the bird with Black Kites Milvus migrans and on several visits with an immature and an adult Red-tailed Buzzard Buteo auguralis present in the University grounds at the same time.

GENERAL APPEARANCE: Perched it looked superficially like a heavy version of the Black Kite although on closer inspection it had an almost eagle-like appearance with heavily streaked underparts and dark-brown, streaked, upperparts. In size it was obviously bigger in build than either Black Kite or Red-tailed Buzzard, and direct comparison suggested $1\frac{1}{4}$ - $1\frac{1}{2}$ the size of a Black Kite. When flushed, it usually flew with a heavy somewhat laboured flight, low over the fields, often gliding up into another tree with shallowly V-ed wings. In flight, the general impression above was dark brown lightened at the shoulders with a buff-brown "mottling"; below there was a conspicuous, predominantly paler pattern. The primaries and secondaries were whitish with black-brown tips to the primaries and two narrow lines parallel to the wing edge. The coverts were fawn-brown. The body was streaked below with a conspicuous dark-brown bilobed patch across the belly and flanks. The tail was, as noted by Hopson, proportionately longer than that of auguralis which also, in comparison, had a lighter, more buoyant flight.

UPPERPARTS: Head brown, streaked with cinnamon-brown and heavily so on the forehead; nape and hind neck paler with dark cinnamon-brown streaks. Face paler brown, faintly streaked with fine streaks and separated from the top of the head by a heavy "brow" of dark-brown. Back and upper-tail dark earth-brown, the latter with no conspicuous bars above. Wings, when folded, with dark-brown primaries and secondaries; the secondary coverts also dark-brown but with a paler, narrow edging; the upper wing coverts dark brown with "mottlings" of a paler buff-brown at the carpal joint; bastard-wing pale buff (front view of sitting bird only).

UNDERPARTS: Throat and breast yellow-brown streaked with dark-brown finely on the throat and more heavily on the breast. Belly and flanks dark brown. Vent and undertail coverts pale brown, almost whitish. Undertail paler than uppertail, transverse bars not very contrasted. The sitting bird when seen from the front appeared to have a pale bib and dark brown "trousers".

SOFT PARTS: Irides grey, perhaps changing to very pale yellow during the time the bird spent at Ibadan. Cere dirty yellow. Bill brown-horn. Legs feathered to joint only with dirty yellow tarsi and feet and black claws.

.....

WILDFOWL IN NIGERIA
THE 1967/68 CENSUS.

R. E. Sharland.

In January 1968 the Nigerian Ornithologists' Society co-operated for the second time with the I. W. R. B. and attempted a census of duck in certain areas in Nigeria.

It was not possible to obtain as many observers as the previous year; nevertheless it was apparent from the results that the number of migrant duck present was considerably less than the year before.

Southern Nigeria.

Counts on resevoirs in the Ibadan area were restricted by the emergency and no duck were recorded. Counts however were made in the Ilaro area producing 35 White-faced Duck Dendrocygna viduata and one Egyptian Goose Alopochen aegyptiacus.

No counts were made in the Eastern Region. I feel that duck are not so rare in some areas of Eastern Nigeria. When I visited Itu in 1951 I found two pairs of Pygmy Geese Nettapus auritus and saw three small flocks of White-faced Duck on the rice fields in the Leper Colony.

The Great Rivers.

Three counts were made on the River Niger. Some numbers of African species were counted but no Palaearctic duck were found.

It is worth noting that Leslie Brown in "Birds and I" 1947 says that "large numbers of ducks, notably Teal and Pintail, visit some swamps about the river, liking especially rice fields.....Garganey also occur, but not in such numbers or so far South".

It would be interesting to know whether the absence of recent reports of migrant duck near the River Niger is a true change in habits or merely means lack of observers. My personal experience is limited to marshes near the Benue in 1951 when I saw Garganey Anas querquedula in flocks up to 30.

The River Yobe Drainage Basin.

Wildfowl counts were made near Nguru, Hadejia, Damasak and Kazaure.

The poor rainfall during the previous summer meant that many of the lakes near Kano dried up very early and some lakes near Nguru were reduced in size. Rainfall can vary greatly even in a matter of a few miles. The Kazaure lakes (which strictly do not drain into the Yobe system) held much more water this year and more duck were seen there than for many years past.

Garganey were recorded in nearly all localities usually in smaller flocks than 1966/67 with the exception of Kazaure- 1,200 in February and Nguru-1,300 in December. Pintail Dafila acuta were comparatively scarce the largest flock- 250 being seen at Damasak in January. Ferruginous Duck Nyroca nyroca showed little change from the year before, 300 being counted in three places. The only other Palaearctic duck recorded was a Teal Anas crecca seen near Accra.

Of African species White-faced Duck appeared to be slightly less numerous than the year before and Fulvous Duck Dendrocygna fulva were markedly fewer, the largest flock being 250 at Nguru.

Numbers of African geese appeared to be fewer than the year before. The largest count of Knob-billed Geese Sarkidiornis melanotus was 100 and Egyptian