



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



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June and July totals are much lower than that of August. These records strongly suggest trans-Saharan migration, the alternative of a journey up the Senegal river and down the Niger being almost ruled out by the date. Roux (1959, *La terre et La Vie*, 106 (4) : 315-321) states that most wader species are represented in the lower Senegal valley by late August or early September. A journey from the coast up the Niger (over four hundred miles) is most unlikely.

That these birds are passing through is clearly indicated by the fact that from about 19:00 hours on the 14th August until the morning of the 16th there was complete overcast at Kainji with a great deal of rain. On the 15th a Redshank *Tringa totanus*, the first record for the area, was seen together with a Greenshank *Glottis nebularius*, a Wood Sandpiper *Tringa glareola*, several Common Sandpipers, three Grey Pratincoles *Galachrysis cinerea*, and a Temminck's Courser *Cursorius temminckii*. This was only the second wet season record of the pratincoles and the first of a courser. By the afternoon of the 17th August only a reduced number of Common Sandpipers remained. Heavy overcast and rain also occurred on the nights of the 17th and 22nd of August. The other point of interest is that, by contrast, the Little Stint *Actinia minuta* (presumably the same bird) should have lingered for four days at the sewage lagoon.

Frank Walsh.

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GREY PLOVERS INLAND IN NIGERIA.

Moreau (1967, *Ibis* 109 : 232-259) lists waders for which evidence of trans-Saharan migration is available. He does not mention Grey Plover *Squatarola squatarola*. Grey Plovers were noted on a muddy island in the Niger river at Bussa (10° 15' N., 4° 33' E.) on seven visits between about 26th October, 1967, and 11th January, 1968. On four occasions a pair of birds were present, on the others only a single bird. By January the island was fairly dry and had been planted with assorted local crops.

Grey Plovers have been reported from Lake Chad by Hopson (1964, *Bull. Niger. Orn. Soc.* 1(4):7-15), and by Moorhouse (1968, *Bull. Niger. Orn. Soc.* 5(17) :13-15) from near Kumasi, but have not been reported elsewhere inland in West Africa. The Niger valley record taken with the others cited strongly suggests that the Grey Plover may well be included in the list of trans-Saharan migrants.

Frank Walsh.

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INLAND RECORDS OF GULLS.

Hitherto the only published record of Lesser Black-backed Gulls *Larus fuscus* inland in West Africa seems to be from Lake Chad where Hopson (1964, *Bull. Niger. Orn. Soc.* 1(4):7-15) regarded them as frequent from October to April. During the 1967/68 dry season immature *fuscus* were seen on three occasions on the river Niger.

- 3. x. 67 - A second year bird in good condition was seen settled on the water at Libate (10° 12' N., 4° 33' E.). on the canoe's approach the bird rose and flew off strongly downstream until out of sight.
- 5. i. 68 - Two immature birds were seen circling about high over the confluence of the Oli and Niger rivers (9° 46' N., 4° 38' E.).
- 11. i. 68 - At 09.00 hours a single immature bird was seen flying steadily downstream at a height of about 50 feet at Garafini (10° 2' N., 4° 35' E.).

Taken with the Chad record these sightings suggest that at least some members of this species may undergo trans-Saharan migration.

The Black-headed Gull *Larus ridibundus* has also been reported from Lake Chad and there is a record from the Upper Niger, Elgood et al. (1966, *Ibis* 108 :84-116). *L. ridibundus* has twice been positively identified on the Niger at the southern tip of Fogo Island (10° 15' N., 4° 33' E.). In each case a pair of birds were involved. On the first occasion 28th December, 1967, the birds were in winter plumage but on the second, the 15th April, 1968, both birds were in full breeding plumage. In addition to these, seven other sightings of gulls were made in the same area, and