



West African Ornithological Society
Société d'Ornithologie de l'Ouest
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TWO SPECIES NEW TO IBADAN,
AND ASSOCIATED RECORDS.

R. W. Ashford.

On 16th December, 1968, four Sedge Warblers Acrocephalus schoenobaenus were seen and heard calling in a patch of Amaranthus spinosus, a spiny weed about 3ft. high, on the University of Ibadan farm. As this bird is previously unrecorded from the area, a mist net was put up to confirm their identity. The net was so productive that it was left in the same area until 18th December and intermittently from 4th to 29th January, 1969, with the following results: (Table 1.).

	D E C.			J A N U A R Y																	Total	Origin
	16	17	18	4	5	6	7	8	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	20	21			
<u>A. schoenobaenus</u>	1			2	1	1				1		3						1			10	Pal. mig.
<u>S. rubetra</u>		1									1		1								3	Pal. mig.
<u>S. cucullatus</u>		1		1						6			1	1	1		1				12	Ethiopian
<u>A. cervinus</u>			2									1			1				1		5	Pal. mig.
<u>C. svecica</u>			1																		1	Pal. mig.
<u>A. arundinaceus</u>				1	1	1	1			1	1			1	1						8	Pal. mig.
<u>A. scirpaceus</u>				1							1										2	Pal. mig.
<u>M. flava</u>					2	3	1	1		1			1						1	1	11	Pal. mig.
<u>T. libonyanus</u>									1												1	Ethiopian
<u>P. phoenicurus</u>											1										1	Pal. mig.
<u>C. erythropus</u>											1										1	Ethiopian
<u>P. trochilus</u>													1			2					3	Pal. mig.
<u>H. polyglotta</u>														1							1	Pal. mig.
<u>L. megarhynchos</u>															1						1	Pal. mig.
<u>C. brachypterus</u>																1					1	Ethiopian
<u>C. corvina</u>																1					1	Ethiopian
<u>S. borin</u>																		1			1	Pal. mig.

Table 1. Birds caught in 2 30' by 8' mist nets, in farm-land overgrown with Amaranthus spinosus

A number of interesting points may be taken from this table:

1. The capture of a Bluethroat Cyanosylvia svecica is most remarkable, Fry (1966) summarising the status of this species, suggests that it is of regular and frequent occurrence in Nigeria north of 10°. The present record is about 500 miles S.W. of the previous limit at Zaria. Although this supports Fry's contention that the Bluethroat is commoner than was previously thought, there is no reason to suppose that the regular winter range of this bird extends so far south.
2. The three species of Acrocephalus are worthy of note. A. scirpaceus and A. arundinaceus had previously been found twice and once respectively in Ibadan (Ashford & Parker, 1968) and A. schoenobaenus never. A. schoenobaenus is one of the commonest dry season visitors to Lake Chad, is fairly common in Kano, and regular but not common between October and March in Zaria. In the south the species does not seem to be common. Button netted one near Ilaro in February 1968, this is the only recent record from the south-west. A. arundinaceus is not numerous at Lake Chad, and only a few have been seen

in Kano. At Zaria it is rare, and again the only recent record from the south west is one from Ilaro in March 1968.

A. scirpaceus has a similar dry season distribution to the above two; it is rather less numerous than A. arundinaceus, and has not been recorded from the south west in recent years.

Of all three of the above species, the only available southern records not mentioned above are from the south east.

Although records are very inadequate, there is no evidence that the present ones are normal. It should be noted that all the birds captured had one toe removed, and only one A. schoenobaenus and one A. arundinaceus were recaptured. The total populations at risk in this small area were therefore quite large.

3. The Redstart Phoenicurus phoenicurus is, according to Elgood et al (1966) the third record from the south of the country.
4. It now seems that Red-throated Pipits Anthus cervinus winter regularly on the University campus (see Pettet, 1968).

On 23rd January the weed patch was cleared for farming. The enormous preponderance of migrant birds in this ephemeral man made habitat is remarkable: 37 out of 53 individuals and 12 out of 17 species were palaeartic. This gives a good objective example of a phenomenon which is very obvious to a casual observer on the edge of the forest zone.

References:

- Recent Acrocephalus records were extracted from Bull.Niger.Orn.Soc. Vols.1-5.
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