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BIRDS OF NORTHERN AND CENTRAL BORNU

David Wells and Frank Walsh

PART 2. Intra-African Migrants

Part 2 covers Total and Partial Dry-season migrants, Total and Partial Wet-season migrants, Total and Partial Niger water-level migrants and Intra-African Passage migrants. Observations were made from September 1965 through May 1969.

Total Dry-season migrants

SPECIES

HABITAT

STATUS

Swamp-forest
 Riparian/Kurimi woodl.
 Guinea woodl.
 Sub-sudan sav.
 Village
 Inselberg
 Fadama
 Aquatic

Egretta garzetta

3 3

ix-iv Fadamas, fringing swamp vegetation and sand-bars along the Niger. African and Palaearctic individuals not distinguished. At Kainji in 1967 marked influx mid x-mid xi; in 1968 first recorded 16.ix, peak nos. 29.xi. At Rofia in 1968, numerous 23.ix, very few 21.x and none 20.xi. (see also Palaearctic migrant).

Bubulcus ibis

4

4 4

ix-vii Fadamas, sub-sudan and degraded savanna, guinea woodland - wherever there are herds of cattle or other stock. Present just north of the study area in the Yauri and Malendo districts early viii and many hundreds at New Rofia 23.ix.68, but local southern limit of the wet-s. range has not been determined. In New Bussa area present late x - mid v.

Anastomus lamelligerus

4 4

4

ix-vii Mainly in small flocks along the Niger and in adjacent fadamas. Occasionally along larger tributaries (Oli, Herai). Commonest round Foge Island. Roosts in the tops of riparian woodland thickets. Main arrival xii, departure vi: extreme dates 4.xi and 21.vii.

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- Leptoptilos crumeniferus 1 1
xii-ii Odd birds south to Kainji. Possibly a post-breeding dispersal (only in small numbers south of 7°11'N.).
- Ibis 2
ii-v Individuals or small groups along the Niger (outside the study area a party of 18 on a sand-bar just south of Jebba 8.ii.67). Latest date in the study area 26.v. Possibly a post-breeding dispersal.
- Threskiornis aethiopica 1 1
ii Occasional birds along the Niger and over Niger-side fadamas south to Warra.
- Sagittarius serpentarius 2
iii-v Guinea woodland along mid and upper Oli. Arrives mid iii and leaves late v (a bird on the Wawa-Kaiama road 19.v. 67 may have been migrating).
- Falco biarmicus 2 2 2
xii-ii, iv, v Most regularly seen in the vicinity of villages. Status not entirely certain but evidence suggests a total dry-s. migrant. Commoner in the north than in the south any may prove to be resident there.
- Falco chiquera 1 2
xi, xii, ii, iv-vi Most regularly seen in sub-sudan, degraded and cultivated savanna. Status not entirely certain but evidence suggests a total dry-s. migrant. Latest date 22.vi. 67 (Moca).
- Falco tinnunculus 3 3
x-vii African and Palaearctic individuals not distinguished. Extreme dates 25.x and 17.vii. (See also Palaearctic migrant).
- Chelictinia riocourii 1
ii A party of 6 over Rofia 28.ii.67. In late ii.69 single birds recorded at Agwarra and Yelwa. Status uncertain but Borgu could be near the limit of a southward migration (or the species may only be a vagrant to our area).

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Milvus migrans

4 4 4 4 4 3 3

ix-vii. Particularly common along the Niger and round villages. Gathers over bush-fires. Br. nests recorded i and v. Common x-v but totally absent only in viii.

Buastur rufipennis

4 4

x-vii Very common in guinea woodland, sub-sudan, degraded and cultivated savanna. Display and copulation recorded ii,iii. Much attracted to bush-fires.

Buteo auguralis

3 3 3

xi-vi Widespread and frequent in degraded and cultivated savanna, guinea and kurimi woodland. Br. nesting starts ii-iii and most young fly by late v. (but one downy chick probably of this species in a nest near Little Konkon 26.v. 67). Nest sites often used in successive years. Extreme dates New Bussa area 17.xi and 12.v; at Shagunu still present 21.vi.67.

Accipiter badius

2 2 3 1

x-vi Variety of habitats but most frequent in riparian woodland. Generally very much less common than in the forest-edge zone at Ibadan. Extreme dates 14.x. and 9.vi.

Neotis denhami

2 3

xi-vi Mainly guinea woodland, where it prefers newly burnt ground. Recorded in degraded savanna etc. during migration periods. Display observed 5.iii.66 but breeding not proven. Extreme dates 19.xi and 22.vi.

Afribyx senegallus

2

x-vii Fadamas and grassy banks mainly along the Niger and larger tributaries (Oli). 2 pairs on marshy fadama along the upper K'Pan 22.vi.67; also recorded in fadamas away from rivers.

Gareola pratincola

4 4

x-vi Sand-bars and fadamas along the Niger. Suspected breeding colony just north of Shagunu (iv). Extreme dates 12.x and 23.vi.

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- Pterocles quadricinctus* 4
 x-v Favours bare ground in degraded savanna: sometimes along roads. Evidence of passage, with peak numbers x and late iii-iv. Extreme dates New Bussa area 16.x and 26.iv.
- Oena capensis* 4
 ix-iv Commonest along roads. Evidence of passage, with peak numbers x and late i-early iii. Extreme dates 24.ix and 27.iv.
- Cuculus gularis* 2 2 2 2
 i-vi Recorded in a variety of habitats from Dugga south to the Kontagora-Maingyara rivers and Shaffini. Extreme dates 17.i and 22.vi.
- Clamator glandarius* 1
 xi,i Very few records, all from degraded savanna. Status uncertain but probably a regular migrant in small numbers.
- Clamator jacobinus* 1
 v Only one record, from riparian woodland at Shagunu. As with *C. glandarius* status uncertain but probably regular migrant in small numbers.
- Lampromorpha klaasi* 3 1
 x-vi Frequent in riparian woodland and also recorded from Shaffini swampforest. Status still in some doubt.
- Coracias abyssinicus* 4 4
 x-vi Common in sub-sudan, degraded and cultivated savanna; guinea woodland. Evidence of passage, with peak numbers xii-i and iv-v. Extreme dates New Bussa area 12.x and 26.v. At Moca still present 22.vi.67.
- Upupa senegalensis* 3 3
 xi-vi African and Palaearctic species not distinguished in the field. Hoopoes recorded in degraded savanna and guinea woodland (flock of 11+ in the Game Reserve on 24.ii.68). Extreme dates 6.xi (Game Reserve) and 20.vi (Old Garafini).
- Halcyon leucocephala* 3 3 2
 xi-vi Open riparian and kurimi woodland: also recorded from Shaffini swampforest. Br. nests in holes in steep-cut sandy

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banks of the Niger and other rivers during the low-water period. Occupied holes recorded iii, iv; adult with 2 full-grown young in Fellagi kurimi 26.v.67. Nest holes recorded very close to those of Ceryle rudis - possibly factor of similar nesting requirements, but observations by FW suggest that Halcyon, may also derive protection through aggressive behaviour of Ceryle at nest. Entirely different feeding ecology would obviate competition in feeding young. Extreme dates 8.xi and 22.vi.

ix-vi Widespread over fadamas, subsudan and degraded savanna, guinea woodland. Attracted to cattle herds and bush-fires. Br. nests in steep-cut banks of the Niger. Excavation of holes may begin as early as x and at a colony of 2-300 pairs at Shagunu is completed in iii. Young are being fed in iv and start to leave the nest during v. Colony vacated late vi. Extreme dates in Shagunu-Foge Island area 20.ix and 21.vi. In 1968 first record at Kainji 13.ix. (See Walsh, 1968. Bull. Niger. Orn. Soc. 5(17): 10-13).

x-ii, iv, v Mainly a passage migrant but small dry-s. population in Shaffini swamp-forest and Niger riparian woodland round Bajibo. The northernmost dry-s. record a single bird on an island of the Niger at 10° 32'N on 28.ii.67. (See also Passage migrant). (See Walsh, 1968. Bull. Niger. Orn. Soc. 5(17: 10-13).

x-vii Common in sub-sudan and degraded savanna; guinea woodland. Mass movements north late v-vi, and south second half of x. Extreme dates New Bussa area 2.x and 25.vi.

x-v Commonest in degraded and cultivated savanna round New Bussa. Comparatively few records from the Shagunu area.

Merops rubicus 4 4 4 4 4

Aerops albicollis 1 4 3

Lophoceros nasutus 4 4 4

Pinarocorys erythropygia 4 3

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Song flights common in iii. Extreme dates New Bussa area 28.x and 26.v.

Eremopterix leucotis

4 xi-iii Degraded savanna, commonest on open, burnt ground. Extreme dates 4.xi. (New Bussa) and 25.iii (Luma).

Hippolais pallida

3 1 xi-v Frequent in riparian and kurimi woodland: also recorded in Shaffini swamp-forest. African and Palaearctic individuals not distinguished in the field. Extreme dates 22.xi (Kontagora) and 26.v (Fellagi). Sub-song recorded at Shagunu 4.iii.67. (See also Palaearctic migrant).

Lamprocolius chloropterus

4 4 x-vi (?ix) Status not entirely certain but evidence suggests total dry-s. migrant. Br. nests in tree-holes in well grown guinea woodland (recorded ii, iii). Birds in juvenile plumage recorded v, vi.

Hedydipna platura

4 4 x-iv Common in degraded savanna and guinea woodland. Males in bright plumage late x/xi-iii (moulting in iv). Br. nesting recorded in degraded savanna round New Bussa xli-i. Extreme dates New Bussa area 24.x and 25.iv.

Gymnoris dentata

4 4 ix-vi One of the commonest passerines in sub-sudan and degraded savanna and guinea woodland during dry-s. Br. nests in tree-holes xli-i. South of sub-sudan zone present x-v only (extreme dates New Bussa area 1.x and 26.v.). Extreme dates in the north 7.ix (Tungan Teku) and 22.vi (Agwarra).

Partial Dry-season migrants

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Ardea cinerea

3 3

x-v, vii-ix Padasas; fringing swamp vegetation and sand-bars

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along the Niger. African and Palaearctic individuals not distinguished but probable that at least part of the dry-s. increase due to African immigrants. Marked influx in the Kainji area late x.66; 20-30.x.68. (See also Palaearctic migrant).

x-viii Fadamas and fringing swamp vegetation along the Niger (commonest north of Bussa); also along the Oli. Scarce in the wet-s. African and Palaearctic individuals not distinguished but probable that the former account for at least part of the dry-s. increase. (See also Palaearctic migrant).

x-vi, viii, ix Fadamas; fringing swamp vegetation along the Niger. Very scarce in wet-s. Arrives in large numbers mid x and remains frequent to late iv (most numerous x-xi). African and Palaearctic individuals not distinguished but former probably account for at least part of dry-s. increase. (See also Palaearctic migrant).

x-v, vii-ix Fadamas and fringing swamp vegetation along the Niger; also along tributaries (Oli, Henai, Doro). Often rests in riparian woodland/thicket. Dry-s. increase reaches peak in ii.

ix-vi Common in sub-sudan, degraded and cultivated savanna, guinea, riparian and kurimi woodland. Some probably present at all times of year, at least south to Shagunu, but commoner in dry-s. In New Bussa area apparently absent during wet-s. and extreme dates there are 16.x and 15.v. (heavy passage recorded at New Bussa late x-xi and iv-early v.). Males with long second primaries recorded xi-vi.

xii-iii, vi, viii, ix Mostly seen in degraded savanna and along

Pyrrherodia purpurea 3

Ardeola ralloides 3

Hagedashia hagedash 3

Macrodipteryx longipennis 4 4 4

Scotornis climacurus 4 3 3

A F I V SS GW RK SF

roads but roosts in woodland. Status not entirely certain but probably commoner during the dry-s. Birds netted viii, ix in mault.

Ceracias naevius 3 2

x-v, vii, viii Commonest in sub-sudan and degraded savanna. Total dry-s. migrant in Northern Guinea zone (recorded south to Oli river). Extreme dates 17.x. (New Bussa) and 21.v. (Kali). Numbers fluctuate from year to year in this zone. In northern sub-sudan zone probably present throughout the year (wet-s. records Agwarra northwards).

Oriolus auratus 3

x-vi, viii, ix Fairly frequent in well grown guinea woodland. Decrease in numbers during the wet-s.

Fringillaria tahapisi 4 4

i-xii Common during dry-s. in sub-sudan and degraded savanna, and guinea woodland. Main influx x and exodus iv-v. Very few wet-s. records.

Total Wet-season migrants

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Lisotis melanogaster 3 3

v-x Frequent in sub-sudan, degraded savanna and guinea woodland. ?Br. display flight by the males common in vi. Extreme dates 21.v and 4.x (Game Reserve).

Clamator levaillantii 3 3

iv, v, ix, x Commonest in riparian woodland and thickets along the Niger, but also frequent in kurimi and guinea woodland. ?Br. female with hypertrophied oviduct collected at Shagunu 4.ix.65.

Lamprophya caprius 3 3

v-x Degraded savanna, riverine and kurimi woodland. Extreme dates 26.v (Shagunu) and 7.x (New Bussa).

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Micropus caffer

3 3 3

iii-xi Flocks fairly frequent over degraded savanna, guinea woodland, inselbergs etc. Recorded from Kubli south to Little Konkon. Extreme dates 25.iii and 12.xi.

Eurystomus afer

3 4

iv-xii Commonest in riparian woodland, particularly in the Foge Island area, but widespread also in guinea woodland. Common vi-x: the majority leave by late x and relatively few present outside this period. Extreme dates 5.iv and 14.xii.

Halcyon senegalensis

3

v-xi Riparian and kurimi woodland. Extreme dates 23.v and 14.xi (but one recorded Yelwa, north of our area, 20.xi.68).

Merops malimbicus

1 1

vii-ix Occasional records over degraded savanna and guinea woodland to 10°N. (largest flock 24 over central Game Reserve 20-21.ix.67). Status uncertain and may only be vagrant. No known breeding colonies in our area. (see Walsh, 1968. Bull. Niger. Orn. Soc. 5(17): 10-13).

Hirundo abyssinica

3 3 2

iii-viii Degraded savanna, inselbergs etc. Frequent in mixed hirundine flocks over the Niger. Br. nests under culverts and river bridges at least mid iv-vii. Extreme dates 17.iii (Timu and Doro bridges) and 15.viii (Kainji).

Psalidoprochne obscura

3 2

iv-ix Mostly in guinea woodland; rather less frequently in riparian woodland along the Niger and larger tributaries. Extreme dates 26.iv and 18.ix.

Cinnyricinclus leucogaster

3 3 3

iii-x A variety of habitats, including degraded savanna; guinea, riparian and kurimi woodland; Shaffini swamp-forest. Extreme dates 3.iii (Shaffini) and 7.x (Mawa).

Cinnyris cupreus

2 2 1

iv-x Mainly riparian thickets (records from Swashi to extreme south). Migrant status uncertain. No records outside the period 19.iv. (Shaffini) and 27.x (New Bussa) but

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sunbirds collect in dense kurimi woodland during dry-s. This species could be among them and may only undergo local movements.

iv, viii, ix Status as for Cinnyris cupreus. Earliest record 18.iv.67, on Muruma river in south of study area (on Moshi river south of our area, a pair plus 2 males in breeding plumage 28.iii.67). A male in full breeding plumage during viii at the Kontagora outfall and males in half-plumage in kurimi woodland at Shagunu, early ix.

Cinnyris venustus

1 1

Partial Wet-season migrants

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Cossypha niveicapilla

4 1

xii-vii, ix Riparian and kurimi woodland/thicket; Shaffini swamp-forest. Round Kainji and southwards present throughout the year, withdrawing into dense thickets during dry-s. In Foge Island-Shagunu area has not been recorded outside the period iv-ix, though mist nets were set in dense thickets during dry-s. At Shagunu earliest date 7.iv. but main influx in v. Species still common in ix. Pr. spotted juveniles in riverine woodland at Shagunu 5.ix.65 (adults in moult early ix).

Campephaga phoenicea

3 1

iv-ii Riparian and kurimi woodland; Shaffini swamp-forest. Relatively few records outside the period iv-ix, and only in favourable, dense spots (north to Shagunu). Copulation observed at Shagunu 21.vi.67.

Cinnyris coccinigaster

3 1

i-xii Riverine and kurimi woodland; Shaffini swamp-forest. Probably resident in the Shaffini area and no obvious fluctuation in numbers round New Busa/Kainji (but never

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numerous there). Round Shagunu and Foge Island not recorded outside 5.iv-29.xii, but frequent during this period. ? Moves out with end of Bombax flowering season.

i-xii Sub-sudan and degraded savanna, guinea, riparian and kurimi woodland. Some present throughout the year north to at least New Bussa, but with big increase in numbers late iv-mid x. Round Shagunu and further north absent outside this period, and main influx does not occur until v/vi. ?Br. female with hypertrophied oviduct collected at Shagunu 3.ix. 65.

Total Niger water-level migrants

A F I V SS GW RK SF

Leucopoliu marginatus 4

xi-vi Sand-bars along the Niger. Br. nests on mid-river sand-bars. Laying suspected as early as late iii; eggs (c/4) at Shagunu 28.v.66. One nearly full grown juvenile on the same sandbar two days earlier. Eggs very hard to locate as parent almost completely covers them before leaving.

Xiphidiopterus albiceps 4

x-viii Sand-bars and rocks along the Niger north to Shagunu. Largely replaced along flood-plain stretch by Hoplopterus spinosus. Also occurs along larger tributaries (Oli, Timu). Br. young chick on a sand-bar at Awuru 1.iv.67 (early low-water period). Species common x-v, sporadic vi-viii. At Kainji 1968 earliest record 5.x. with marked passage 15-20.x.

Galachrysea nuchalis 4

iii-ix Almost exclusively on rocks along the Niger and larger tributaries (Oli). Common late iv-mid vii. Extreme dates 9.iii and 1.ix. In 1969 this species arrived at the customary time despite the formation of the lake. ?Br.

Galachrysea cinerea 4

i-xi Sand-bars along the Niger. One record of flock hawking

A F I V SS CW RK SF

insects through tree-tops of Shaguru kurimi (v). Common iii-vii but entirely absent only in xii. Br. nests in loose colonies on sand-bars. Laying starts at least in iv (copulation recorded 26.iv.67) and eggs and small chicks at Shaguru v,vi. Dependent young still present in vii. Breeding adults have prominent distraction display, and eggs not covered when the nest is left.

iv-viii The Niger. Br. nests on mid-river sand-bars: eggs at Shaguru v,vi. Extreme dates 19.iv. and 27.viii.

xi-viii The Niger. Br. nests on sand-bars. Laying starts iv; eggs and young chicks at Shaguru v,vi, and one nearly flying young 21.vi.67. Dependent young must still be present in vii.

iv-vii Br. two colonies in Niger sand-bars near Awuru (90 pairs in the larger in 1967). Holes excavated in iv, laying starts in v, and the young fly in vii. In 1968 one or two pairs also bred at Kainji and ca. 150 pairs recorded excavating on a sand-bar between Bussa and Shaguru, late iv. Recorded from riparian woodland at Shaguru and guinea woodland at Menai on migration, early iv. Extreme dates i,iv (Awuru) and 29.vii (near Bussa). (See Walsh, 1968. Bull. Niger. Orn. Soc. 3(11): 74, and 5(17): 10-13).

Partial Niger water-level migrants

A F I V SS GW RK SF

Oediconemus senegalensis 4 1
i-xii Banks, sand-bars and islets along the Niger and some larger tributaries (Oli, Timu, Swashi). Present throughout the year but commonest during Niger low-water period

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(marked increased in numbers iv-v), One recorded on open ground near Timu bridge 3.iii.66. Br. eggs (c/2) on a sandbar of the Swashi near Luma 26.iv.66,

Hoplopterus spinosus 4 4 x-vi, viii, ix Common along the Niger (fadamas, cultivated floodplain, river banks, sand-bars, rocks). Largely replaced by Xiphidiopterus albiceps along the rocky stretch of the Niger below Bussa and along tributary rivers. Not recorded south of Kainji. Commonest x-vi. Br. nests on Niger sandbars during low-water period. Eggs recorded Shagunu area iv and v.

Pluvianus aegyptius 4 i-xii Banks, sand-bars and rocks of the Niger and larger tributaries. Present throughout the year but relatively few remain during the flood period viii-ix. Br. nests on sandbars during the low-water period.

Riparia paludicola 4 x-v, vii-ix Along the Niger. Gathers in large feeding flocks with other hirundines. Probably present throughout the year but commonest in the early low-water period. No known breeding colonies in our area (but ?this species visiting holes by Wuya bridge, Kaduna river 4.x.68).

Intra-African Passage migrants

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Dissoura episcopus 3 3 ix, xi, xii, ii-v Mostly along the Niger but also recorded along the Oli. Most seen iii-iv during the northward passage (flocks of 70 and 15 heading NNW over Tungan Teku 22.iv.68). Latest date 22.v. (2 at Shagunu). Group bowing display recorded 6.iii.68.

Sphenorhynchus abdiiii 1 1 2 iii, iv, vi Along the Niger; mainly overflying other habitats.

A F I V SS GW RK SF

Larus cirrocephalus

2

Majority of records iii-iv (30 at Agwarra dam 22.iv.68).
No definite records of this species on southward passage.

iv, v Sandbars along the Niger. Most records iv but 2
flying upriver at Shagunu 29.v.66. Status not entirely
certain; gulls present i-iii may have included some indivi-
duals of this species.

Aerops albicollis

x, xi, iv, v Flocks overflying the area on migration late x-
mid xi and late iv-late v (still moving over Shagunu in
some numbers 25.v.67). (See also Total dry-s. migrant).
(See Walsh 1968. Bull. Niger. Orn. Soc. 5(17): 10-13).