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Red-headed Weaver Malimbus rubricollis: 2+ at Lolobi (Hohoe), 31/7, 2 on Ofin H.F.R. Mampong Asante, 7/9.

Blue-billed Mannikin Lonchura bicolor: 2 at Abetifi/Pepease, 6/9.

Grey-crowned Negro Finch Nigrita conicapilla: 1 near Dixcove, 16/8.

White-breasted Negro Finch Nigrita fuscaota: 2 on Ofin H.F.R., 7/9.

Blue-billed Weaver Spermophaga haematina: 1 at Dixcove, 16/8, singing from the bottom of a bush.

My thanks are due in connection with these records to many officials of the Ministry of Forestry, whose co-operation exceeded all hopes; in particular those working for the Ministry in Kumasi.

to be continued.

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BIRD RECORDS FROM NIGER AND MALI:

JULY - AUGUST 1969.

R.W.W.Sutton.

In July 1969 I left Ghana and travelled overland across the Sahara Desert to North Africa. This involved travelling through Upper Volta, Niger and Mali: I travelled from Bawku in Ghana to Niamey in Niger, then up the River Niger to Gao, then to Bourem and up to Tessalit and thence into Algeria. Such records as I have are obviously extremely superficial, but some seem of some interest. I was most surprised at the sheer numbers of birds to be seen on the southern edge of the Sahara; many species occurred further to the north than I had expected. In this part of Africa, I believe that the real dividing line between West and North African fauna consists of the great waterless waste, referred to on some maps as Tanezrouft, that extends for at least 500 miles from the area north of Tessalit in Mali to Reggene in southern Algeria. I did not see a single bird in this area.

Nomenclature follows White, C.M.N. (1960-65) Check List of African Birds.

Grey Pelican Pelecanus rufescens: Flocks of up to 20 seen between Ansongo and Gao, Mali, 11/7 - 19/7.

Black-headed Heron Ardea melanocephala: c. 15 found breeding with Abdim's Storks at Ayorou, Niger, 13/7.

Abdim's Stork Ciconia abdimii: Very common near the River Niger between Niamey and Bourem, 11-20/7; c30 breeding at Atorou, Niger, 13/7.

Sacred Ibis Threskiornis aethiopicus: Many seen between Ansongo and Gao, 11-19/7; they were breeding in Gao.

Ruppell's Vulture Gyps ruppellii: At least 10 seen between Ansongo and Bourem, Mali, between 12/7 and 20/7.

Lanner Falcon Falco biarmicus: 1 by a rain-pool north of Tabankort, Mali, 21/7.

Black Kite Milvus migrans: 1 high overhead at Tessalit, Mali, in the middle of the desert, 25/7.

Martial Eagle Polemaetus bellicosus: Several seen over the road between Niamey and Gao, 11-14/7.

Crowned Crane Balearica pavonina: Flocks of up to 10 seen between Labezana and Ansongo, 13/7.

Sudan Bustard Otis arabs: Individuals seen from near Gao to between Tabankort and Anefis, Mali, 20/7 - 23/7.

Kittlitz' Sand Plover Charadrius pecuarius: Common in the dry bed of the River Niger at Gao, 14-19/7.

Spur-winged Plover Vanellus spinosus: Seen on and near the Niger in Niger and Mali between Ayorou and Gao, 11-19/7.

Chestnut-bellied Sandgrouse Pterocles exustus: Seen in some numbers from Tabankort to about 135 km north of Anefis, 21-23/7.

Speckled Dove Columba guinea: 3 at Bourem, Mali, on the old fort there, 20/7.

Niger Mourning Dove Streptopelia decipiens: Present in some numbers at Labezana, Mali, 13/7.

Rosy-grey Dove Streptopelia roseogrisea: Recorded from about 60 km north of Bourem to Tessalit, Mali, 21-24/7. Tessalit, about Latitude 21°N., is the last oasis before the Tanezrouft.

Senegal Dove Streptopelia senegalensis: Recorded as far north as Tessalit, Mali, where many were found. 23-25/7.

Namaqua Dove Oena capensis: Recorded as far north as Tessalit, Mali, where several were found. 23-25/7.

Pied Cuckoo Clamator jacobinus: 1 between Gao and Bourem, 20/7.

Blue-naped Mousebird Colius macrourus: 6 seen on the outskirts of Gao, 17/7.

European Swift Apus apus: c10 at Gao after a thunderstorm, 17/7. I do not know whether these would have been early migrants or non-breeders staying through the summer.

Blue-checked Bee-eater Merops persicus: 4 adults in trees by a large rain-pool on the road between Gao and Bourem.

- Little Green Bee-eater Merops orientalis: 3 at Tessalit, 24/7.
- Cammine Bee-eater Merops nubicus: Many seen between Niamey and Gao, 11-14/7.
- White-throated Bee-eater Merops albicollis: Recorded as far north as about 75km north of Anefis, Mali, where birds were seen on 22/7.
- Red-beaked Hornbill Tockus erythrorhynchus: 1 at Aquelhoc, Mali, 23/7.
- Hoopoe Lark Alaemon alaudipes: Seen from Anefis to the Mali/Algeria border, usually in the drier parts of the desert, 21-25/7.
- Chestnut-backed Finch Lark Eremopterix leucotis: Recorded in Niger and Mali as far north as Bourem.
- White-fronted Finch Lark Eremopterix nigriceps: Seen from 60km north of Bourem to 75km north of Tessalit, not far from the Algerian border. Of endemic West African species, this one occurred the furthest north.
- Buchanan's Bush Skulker Turdoides fulvus: 2 seen near an oasis 60km north of Bourem, Mali, 21/7.
- White-rumped Black Chat Oenanthe leucopyga: 2 in a village 60km north of Bourem, Mali, 21/7. This seems an interesting record: the species has only been recorded before in West Africa far to the north and north-east - Tuareg country and Bilma, according to Bannerman.
- Black-tailed Chat Cercomela melanura: 2 at Tessalit, Mali, near the black rocks on the edge of the oasis, 24/7.
- Ant Chat Myrmecocichla aethiops: 1 on the edge of a village 60km north of Bourem, Mali, 20/7.
- Black Scrub Robin Cercotrichas podobe: 3 near Gao, 14/7; 2 at Aquelhoc, 23/7; several among the bushes below palm trees at Tessalit, 24/7. All records from Mali.
- Scaly-fronted Warbler Prinia clamans: 3 at Labezana, Mali, (banks of River Niger); 13/7.
- Pale Crag Martin Hirundo fuligula: 3+ at Tessalit, Mali, 23-25/7. According to Bannerman, the species is, in West Africa, only known from the Air Massif and Hoggar, both areas hundreds of miles from Tessalit. \*\*\*
- Great Grey Shrike Lenius excubitor: 1 seen near a village 60km north of Bourem, Mali, 21/7.
- Brown-necked Raven Corvus ruficollis: 2 at Tabankort, Mali, 22/7.
- Blue-eared Glossy Starling Lamprolaima chalybaeus: 3 seen 60km south-east of Gao, Mali, 14/7.
- Chestnut-bellied Starling Spreo pulcher: Found commonly from 100km south-west of Niamey, Niger, to Aquelhoc, Mali, 10-22/7.
- Saharan House Bunting Eberiza striolata: Several seen in a village 60km north of Bourem, Mali, 20/7.

\*\*\* Ptyonoprogne obsolata used by Bannerman (1953) is now considered to be a synonym of Hirundo fuligula. (White, 1961). The range of the West African race H. f. banoensis is Cameroons, northern Nigeria and French Sudan to Sierra Leone and south to Moyen Congo. Ed.

Desert Sparrow Passer simplex: c10 at Tabankort, Mali, 21/7. This, oddly enough, is one of the localities given by Bannerman.

Golden Sparrow Passer luteus: Seen from Gao to Tabankort, Mali, especially at a village 60km north of Bourem, it was much more numerous than Bannerman indicates.

Scaly-fronted Weaver Sporopipes frontalis: 6 at Aquelhoq, Mali, 23/7, about 19° latitude, apparently further north than previous records.

Slender-billed Weaver Ploceus luteolus: 3 among date palms at Tessalit, Mali, 24/7. This species does not seem to have been previously recorded north of Timbuktu: Tessalit is about 350km further north.

Black-faced Dioch Quelea quelea: 6 seen at Labezana, Mali, 13/7.

Cut-throat Weaver Amadina fasciata: 2 feeding on the ground 60km north of Bourem.

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#### A VISIT TO WURNO, NORTHERN NIGERIA

22nd APRIL 1970.

Sir Frederick Podler.

Wurno is about 30 miles north of Sokoto, in the north-eastern corner of Nigeria. I understand that in former times there was in this place a very extensive fadama (marsh) containing a number of shallow natural lakes, which in most years provided small areas of open water even at the end of the dry season. Some ten years ago a dam was built which converted the whole of the fadama area into a catchment area. My visit took place at the end of the dry season, and although the bund of the dam is quite low, it was retaining so much water that, even with the aid of 10 x 50 binoculars, I was unable to distinguish the farther shore. This artificial lake is, therefore, very large. It might well provide exceptional attractions for resident anserines and for palaeartic migrants about to set off for the north across the Sahara, or in the fall of the year returning to their winter haunts. This must be my excuse for offering these hurried notes of a very brief visit. I was able to do no more than gain an impression, of how rewarding a longer visit might be. I hope that my reconnaissance may lead on to a longer visit by a more experienced observer.

The reason for my being at Sokoto was, to acquaint myself with