



West African Ornithological Society
Société d'Ornithologie de l'Ouest
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Red-rumped Swallow Hirundo daurica resident at Bungudu where it seems to nest; our notes agree exactly with Bannerman's (vol. 5, 252).

Sooty Ant-chat Myrmecocichla nigra seen only once, 30 miles S.E. of Sokoto (approximately 12° 40' N., 5° 05' E.), a male in woodland. As this seems to be its furthest extent westwards, the observation needs confirmation. (Mackworth-Praed & Grant, 1955, The Birds of E. & N.E. Africa, 284.)

Long-crested Helmet Shrike P. rionops plumata seen several times at Maru in small flocks.

Lavender Firefinch Estrilda caerulescens resident at Maru near the river where it congregates into small flocks.

Black-faced Firefinch Estrilda larvata seen only once, with a group of Lavender Firefinch at Maru.

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THE RED-EYED DOVE *Streptopelia semitorquata*

IN SIERRA LEONE

Grimes (1971, BNOS 8:31/32) asks for information on the distribution of the Red-eyed Dove. In Sierra Leone it is ubiquitous outside the forest. In the grass woodlands of the northern part of the country it vies with *Streptopelia vinacea* for the status of commonest dove; in the huge areas of farm bush which cover most of southern Sierra Leone it shares the position with *Turtur afer*; in the mangrove belt along the coast it is certainly the most common species, as also in the sandy coastal savanna and lake/river system of the extreme south. From the closed forest, however, it is virtually absent. I have never recorded it in the Peninsula forest at Freetown though it occurs sparingly in forest edge conditions. At Kasewe, 70 miles east of the Peninsula, it occurs regularly in the secondary planted forest which is broken up by clearings, but not in the remaining closed forest. In the

Kambui Hills, another 70 miles eastwards, it comes right to the forest edge and I have a nest record from the Rest House garden literally 20 yards from the start of the unbroken forest. 25 miles further to the south-east lies the Gola Forest stretching to the Liberian frontier, the largest and oldest of the remaining forests of Sierra Leone. Here, as the forest is felled and farms set up, so immediately does the Red-eyed Dove establish itself, and it also invades the half-felled areas interspersed with clearings. At one point a logging road has been driven some 7 miles through true forest and I have found the bird at the end of this road but I assume it was attracted by the forest edge conditions which obtain along the road itself with its thick side growth of Musanga, Harrungana, and Macaranga. (An even more unlikely record from this same area was a Whinchat Saxicola rubetra.) Its distinctive call precludes any possibility that it could be overlooked in the forest canopy, and I think it fair to summarise by saying that the Red-eyed Dove does not occur naturally in the Sierra Leone forests except where these have been tampered with by man.

G.D.Field.

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MALLAM FATORI REVISITED

by

R.E.Sharland

I visited Mallam Fatori between March 14th and 19th, 1972, together with Philip and Francis Hall. The two reed huts built by the Society for R.J.Dowsett are still in excellent condition and although we could have used the Forestry Rest House, the acting Director of the Federal Fisheries Research Station kindly allowed us the use of one of the houses, which was a great help.

I found that the lake shore had receded about 100 yards since I was last there in 1969. I could not obtain precise levels from the Research Station but the falling level of Lake Chad coupled with plans to dam and divert one of the tributaries of the Shari