



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

River must be a serious matter for the Chad Basin Commission to consider and may have, in time, a great effect on the fish and fauna of the area.

We found that the Salvadora inside the Research Station had all been cut down and the area had not been replanted. This meant that we had to go further afield to net Palaearctic migrants. We found three patches of low Salvadora about one quarter of a mile from the area previously used and put up five nets. In just over four days we caught and ringed 206 migrants; considering that we had only about half the usual net-length in use it would seem that the volume of passage was similar to that of previous years.

We ringed very few Ethiopian birds. We found that, apart from Golden Sparrows Passer luteus which were far more numerous than in 1968 or 1969, few Ethiopian birds were in the Salvadora (only four Diochs O. quelea were caught and they were trapped on the shore). Three birds ringed in 1967 or 1968 were controlled - a Long-tailed Nightjar Caprimulgus climacurus, a Common Bulbul Pycnonotus barbatus and a Slender-billed Weaver Ploceus luteolus. The body of a Cordon Bleu Estrilda bengala was also given to us; this bird had been caught and ringed on 29.12.71.

For two days midges were very prolific on the shore line and Sand Martins Riparia riparia were consequently very numerous. Just as we were about to try to catch Sand Martins by flicking the midge hatch ceased and the birds became very few.

We visited the mouth of the River Yobe twice and stayed until dusk on our last evening. We found plenty of papyrus swamp but no reed beds at all. We had imagined that we would see vast numbers of Wagtails Motacilla and Sand Martins flying into roost but actually saw even less than we had seen at Mallam Fatori.

At the mouth of the River Yobe we saw a dark phase Wahlberg's Eagle Aquila wahlbergi and flying over Mallam Fatori next day saw another - this time a light phase with all the underparts practically pure white. This Eagle has been seen at Geidam by R.E.S. and at Potiskum by Blasdale.

We tried to catch waders, Sand Martins and Wagtails on the shore line but with very little success. Ruff Philomachus pugnax were as plentiful as usual.

Palaeartic migrants ringed were:-

Marsh Sandpiper	<i>Tringa stagnatilis</i>	1
"Flava" Wagtail	<i>Motacilla flava</i>	10
Redstart	<i>Phoenicurus phoenicurus</i>	2
Sedge Warbler	<i>Acrocephalus schoenobaenus</i>	8
Reed Warbler	<i>Acrocephalus scirpaceus</i>	17
Olivaceous Warbler	<i>Hippolais pallida</i>	3
Blackcap	<i>Sylvia atricapilla</i>	1
Whitethroat	<i>Sylvia communis</i>	124
Lesser Whitethroat	<i>Sylvia curruca</i>	32
Subalpine Warbler	<i>Sylvia cantillans</i>	6
Willow Warbler	<i>Phylloscopus trochilus</i>	2
		<u>206</u>

We could not see any Typha beds anywhere between Mallam Fatori and the Yobe. There is plenty of *Salvadora* on the "road" from Kukawa to Mallam Fatori but any future ringing at Mallam Fatori will be difficult unless the *Salvadora* there is preserved. I hope that the Forestry Department will take steps to protect this.

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THE NESTS OF THREE FOREST BIRDS

In the past year, I have observed the following 3 nests at Ikot Ibritam, A bak Division, S.E.State, Nigeria (4°46'N., 7°35'E.). The first is described by Bannerman (1953, *Birds of West and Equitorial Africa*), but no date is given. The other two are said to be unknown.

1. Chestnut Wattle-Eye *Dyaphorophia castanea*:

On 26th May, 1972, a schoolboy showed me a nest of this species in a cassava patch among oil palm trees. The nest was 1 ft. above the ground in a small shrub with large soft leaves. It consisted of a very neat, deep, funnel-like cup made of dried grasses and small stems. The rim was lined with a white silken material (spider web?) to help attach it to two surrounding leaves and to bend down a leaf above it, thus partly hiding the nest. The two fresh eggs were very light blue, with dark brown spots, especially at the thick end. Egg measurements were 16 x 12 mm.