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DISTRIBUTIONAL NOTES ON THE BIRDS OF BENIN

By D.T. Holyoak and M.B. Seddon

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INTRODUCTION

Ornithological observations were made during five days spent travelling through Benin from 25-29 Nov 1988. We entered the country from Togo (on the coast) and left northwards into Niger. It seems worthwhile recording the birds seen as the avifauna of the country is poorly known and several of the species we found have not previously been reported, although all are known in Ghana, Togo or Nigeria.

For each species the localities are listed by numbers as in the following list of coordinates. Numbers of birds seen or heard are given in parentheses; H = birds heard only.

List of localities:

- | | | |
|--------------------|-------------------|-------------------|
| 1. 6°15N, 1°47E | 2. 6°15N, 1°48E | 3. 6°21N, 1°52E |
| 4. 6°22N, 1°57E | 5. 6°20N, 2°01E | 6. 6°20N, 2°02E |
| 7. 7°03N, 2°09E | 8. 7°09N, 2°04E | 9. 7°59N, 2°17E |
| 10. 8°01N, 2°24E | 11. 8°01N, 2°25E | 12. 8°28N, 2°36E |
| 13. 8°30N, 2°36E | 14. 8°44N, 2°35E | 15. 8°52N, 2°35E |
| 16. 8°54N, 2°35E | 17. 9°04N, 2°33E | 18. 9°07N, 2°31E |
| 19. 9°19N, 2°34E | 20. 9°32N, 2°37E | 21. 9°54N, 2°46E |
| 22. 9°58N, 2°43E | 23. 10°04N, 2°41E | 24. 10°15N, 2°43E |
| 25. 10°17N, 2°44E | 26. 10°25N, 2°44E | 27. 10°31N, 2°46E |
| 28. 10°37N, 2°47E | 29. 10°44N, 2°49E | 30. 11°10N, 2°39E |
| 31. 11°18N, 3°05E | 32. 11°20N, 3°06E | 33. 11°28N, 3°07E |
| 34. 11°31N, 3°10E | 35. 11°45N, 3°14E | 36. 11°51N, 3°20E |
| 37. 11°53N, 3°21E. | | |

SPECIES LIST

Squacco Heron Ardeola ralloides 36(1)Cattle Egret Bubulcus ibis 3(c.40), 4(c.60), 10(8), 13(c.10), 14(c.38), 25(c.20), 26(1), 36(c.40), 37(c.30),Green Heron Butorides striatus 10(1)Little Egret Egretta garzetta 4(2), 37(1)Great Egret Egretta alba 4(3)Purple Heron Ardea purpurea 4(3)Grey Heron Ardea cinerea 37(2)Black-shouldered Kite Elanus caeruleus 20(1)

- Black Kite Milvus migrans 3(c.5),4(c.12),9(1),10(1),17(1),21(2),22(c.8),31(1),32(1),33(1),35(3),37(c.15)
- Hooded Vulture Necrosyrtes monachus 16(2)
- African Harrier Hawk Polyboroides typus 14(1),21(2)
- Marsh Harrier Circus aeruginosus 4(1),37(1)
- Gabar Goshawk Micronisus gabar 28(1)
- Shikra Accipiter badius 10(1),13(2),16(1),23(2)
- Grasshopper Buzzard Butastur rufipennis 9(3),14(1),22(c.5),29(1),33(1)
- Lizard Buzzard Kaupifalco monogrammicus 2(1),10(1H),17(1H),21(1),22(1H)
- Red-necked Buzzard Buteo auguralis 32(1)
- Lanner Falcon Falco biarmicus 17(1)
- Helmeted Guineafowl Numida meleagris 15(2). A pair was seen accompanied by c.10 quarter-grown chicks.
- White-throated Francolin Francolinus albogularis 17(3H?),26(2). Seldom recorded, but a difficult species to detect except by its calls at dusk and dawn. There are recent reports from Togo (De Roo et al. 1969, Cheke 1982).
- Double-spurred Francolin Francolinus bicalcaratus 17(4),26(2H),33(1H)
- African Jacana Actophilornis africana 3(1)
- Black-winged Stilt Himantopus himantopus 4(c.15)
- Bronze-winged Courser Cursorius chalcopterus 33(1H). Recorded by Green and Sayer (1979) from Arli and/or Pendjari National Parks (Benin or Burkina Faso).
- African Wattled Lapwing Vanellus senegallus 36(3)
- Spur-winged Plover Vanellus spinosus 37(4)
- Ruff Philomachus pugnax 36(c.15),37(c.19)
- Greenshank Tringa nebularia 4(1H)
- Common Sandpiper Actitis hypoleucos 4(3),10(2)
- Common Tern Sterna hirundo 4(1)
- Black Tern Chlidonias niger 4(c.7)
- African Green Pigeon Treron calva 26(1)

- Bruce's Green Pigeon Treron waalia 24(1),33(3)
- Blue-spotted Wood dove Turtur afer 10(2H?),14(1)
- Black-billed Wood Dove Turtur abyssinicus 17(27),21(1),22(c.3),24(1H?),
33(1H?)
- Namaqua Dove Oena capensis 31(1)
- Western Bronze-naped Pigeon Columba iriditorques 7(c.6). Seen in teak
plantation; apparently the first record from Benin although known to
breed in Togo (Cheke et al. 1986, R.A. Cheke in litt.).
- Speckled Pigeon Columba guinea 37(c.6)
- Red-eyed Dove Streptopelia semitorquata 10(2H),14(1H),17(2H),21(c.5)
- Vinaceous Dove Streptopelia vinacea 9(1H),17(c.8),21(1H),22(c.5),23(1H),
25(c.4),26(c.6),30(2H),31(c.3),32(c.12),33(c.20),35(1H)
- Laughing Dove Streptopelia senegalensis 25(3),32(3),35(2H)
- Senegal Parrot Poicephalus senegalus 17(1),26(2),33(c.8),35(2)
- Rose-ringed Parakeet Psittacula krameri 26(1),34(1)
- Violet Turaco Musophaga violacea 21(3)
- Western Grey Plantain-eater Crinifer piscator 17(3),21(1H),22(1),
24(1),26(2),30(1),31(3),32(1),33(2),35(1)
- Senegal Coucal Centropus senegalensis 17(3),26(2H)
- Common Scops Owl Otus scops 17(c.6H),26(2H),33(1H). Seldom recorded but
probably overlooked; listed by Green & Sayer (1979) for Arli and/or
Pendjari National Parks (Benin or Burkina Faso).
- White-faced Scops Owl Otus leucotis 17(1H),26(2H),33(1H)
- Pearl-spotted Owlet Glaucidium perlatum 17(3H),21(1H),26(2H)
- African Wood Owl Strix woodfordii 7(2H). Heard calling at night in teak
plantations; apparently the first record from Benin although known at
similar latitudes in Togo (R.A. Cheke in litt.).
- African Palm Swift Cypsiurus parvus 4(1),9(2),25(1)
- Little Swift Apus affinis 3(c.7),33(1)
- Grey-headed Kingfisher Halcyon leucocephala 6(1)
- Striped Kingfisher Halcyon chelicuti 11(1H),26(1H)
- Malachite Kingfisher Corythornis cristata 4(1)

- Pied Kingfisher Ceryle rudis 3(1),4(c.6)
- White-throated Bee-eater Merops albicollis 2(2),5(2)
- Rufous-crowned Roller Coracias naevia 30(1)
- Abyssinian Roller Coracias abyssinica 9(1),22(3),26(2),30(1),31(3),
33(2),35(1)
- Broad-billed Roller Eurystomus glaucurus 2(c.5)
- Green Wood-hoopoe Phoeniculus purpureus 12(2),26(3)
- Hoopoe Upupa epops 26(1),33(1)
- Red-billed Hornbill Tockus erythrorhynchus 30(c.3H),31(2),32(3),33(c.4),
34(3),35(1H)
- African Pied Hornbill Tockus fasciatus 17(2)
- African Grey Hornbill Tockus nasutus (1H),17(1H),22(1H),26(2),31(1H),
33(2)
- Piping Hornbill Ceratogymna fistulator 17(4)
- Yellow-fronted Tinkerbird Pogoniulus chrysoconus 10(1H),17(1H),22(c.3H),
26(c.4),30(2),31(2),33(1H),35(1H)
- Vieillot's Barbet Lybius vieilloti 26(1),31(1)
- Bearded Barbet Lybius dubius 23(3),26(c.4),33(2)
- Fine-spotted Woodpecker Campethera punctuligera 26(2)
- Grey Woodpecker Dendropicos goertae 33(1)
- Brown-backed Woodpecker Picoides obsoletus 31(1). Seldom recorded.
- Flappet Lark Mirafraga rufocinnamomea 33(1H)
- Sun Lark Galerida modesta 30(2)
- Chestnut-backed Finch-lark Eremopterix leucotis 33(5)
- Barn Swallow Hirundo rustica 4(1),9(c.5?)
- Rufous-chested Swallow Hirundo semirufa 5(6)
- Preuss's Cliff Swallow Hirundo preussi 33(c.50)
- Tree Pipit Anthus trivialis 17(c.8)
- White-breasted Cuckoo-shrike Coracina pectoralis 24(1)

- Common Bulbul Pycnonotus barbatus 3(1), 10(2H), 11(2), 14(c.6), 17(c.6), 21(c.8), 22(c.5), 24(2), 25(1H), 26(c.5), 31(1), 33(c.4)
- Brubru Shrike Nilaus afer 25(1), 33(2H), 35(1H)
- Black-crowned Tchagra Tchagra senegala 11(1H), 17(1H), 22(1H), 25(1H), 26(1), 33(2H)
- Gonolek Laniarius barbarus 22(1H), 25(2), 35(1H)
- Fiscal Shrike Lanius collaris 1(1)
- Yellow-billed Shrike Corvinella corvina 11(1), 12(2), 19(1), 22(1), 26(1)
- Whinchat Saxicola rubetra 8(1)
- Redstart Phoenicurus phoenicurus 22(1), 33(1H)
- African Thrush Turdus pelios 21(1)
- Blackcap Babbler Turdoides reinwardti 21(c.5)
- Brown Babbler Turdoides plebejus 17(c.5), 26(c.9)
- Wood Warbler Phylloscopus sibilatrix 31(1)
- Red-pate Cisticola Cisticola ruficeps 26(1). Seldom recorded, there are two records from Togo (Cheke & Walsh 1980, R.A. Cheke in litt.).
- Singing Cisticola Cisticola cantans 17(2), 33(2)
- Winding Cisticola Cisticola galactotes 4(1)
- Tawny-flanked Prinia Prinia subflava 17(2), 22(2), 26(c.5), 31(c.3), 33(1H)
- Yellow-chested Apalis Apalis flavida 21(4). Although it is apparently surprising to find this species so far north it is known from 10°31N in Ghana (Grimes 1987) and 9°31N in Togo (R.A. Cheke in litt.).
- Grey-backed Camaroptera Camaroptera brevicaudata 21(3), 22(2H), 31(1), 32(1H), 33(1H)
- Green-backed Eremomela Eremomela pusilla 26(4), 33(c.4)
- Nuthatch Warbler Sylvietta brachyura 26(1)
- Senegal Puffback Flycatcher Batis senegalensis 17(2), 21(1), 26(1), 31(2)
- Scarlet-spectacled Wattle-eye Platysteira cyanea 21(1)
- Blue Fairy Flycatcher Erannornis longicauda 21(2)
- Paradise Flycatcher Terpsiphons viridis 21(2)

- White-shouldered Black Tit Parus leucomelas 14(2)
- Pygmy Sunbird Anthreptes platurus 25(2),26(1),31(2)
- Variable Sunbird Nectarinia venusta 2(1),26(2)
- Beautiful Sunbird Nectarinia pulchella 31(3)
- Scarlet-chested Sunbird Nectarinia senegalensis 17(1),25(1),26(c.6),
31(1),33(3)
- Olive-backed Sunbird Nectarinia verticalis 21(1)
- Yellow White-eye Zosterops senegalensis 31(1)
- Yellow-fronted Canary Serinus mozambicus 25(1),32(2),35(2)
- Village Weaver Ploceus cucullatus 5(c.6)
- Southern Masked Weaver Ploceus velatus 25(1),33(2)
- Pin-tailed Whydah Vidua macroura 22(1)
- Paradise Whydah Vidua togoensis or V. interjecta 32(5),33(4). Several male birds seen well had very long rectrices (about 3.5 times length from bill-tip to wing-tip, noticeably longer than in V. paradisea aucupum that we saw and photographed a few days later in southern Niger. Both V. togoensis and V. interjecta might occur in northern Benin (see Payne 1985), but the details of tail shape needed to separate these species were not recorded.
- Grey-headed Sparrow Passer griseus 32(2)
- Bush Sparrow Petronia dentata 14(1),22(1),25(1),26(c.6),29(c.4),30(2),
31(c.4),32(c.20),33(c.6),35(c.4)
- Red-cheeked Cordon-bleu Uraeginthus bengalus 17(2),22(3),25(1),26(c.5),
31(1),32(2),33(c.8)
- Black-rumped Waxbill Estrilda troglodytes 25(c.5),33(c.15)
- Lavender Waxbill Estrilda caerulescens 33(c.5)
- Bronze Mannikin Lonchura cucullata 3(2),17(c.6)
- Blue-eared Glossy Starling Lamprotornis chalybeus 23(3),31(c.6),32(c.5),
33(c.6)
- Long-tailed Glossy Starling Lamprotornis caudatus 32(4),34(2),35(2)
- Purple Glossy Starling Lamprotornis purpureus 19(5),23(2)
- Glossy-backed Drongo Dicrurus adsimilis 17(1),22(1),25(1),26(c.4),31(1),
33(c.3),35(1)

African Golden Oriole Oriolus auratus 27(2)

Black Magpie Ptilostomus afer 18(5),26(2),35(c.10)

Pied Crow Corvus albus 36(1),37(1)

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SUMMARY

Locations of 129 species of bird seen on a trip through the Republic of Benin in November 1988 are recorded.

RÉSUMÉ

Lieux d'observation de 129 espèces vues au cours d'un voyage en République de Bénin en novembre 1988.

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