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URBAN, E.K., FRY, C.H. & KEITH, S. (eds) (1986) *The Birds of Africa*, vol. 2. Academic Press, London.

Received 22 March 1995

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An historical breeding record in Mali and description of the young of the Grasshopper Buzzard *Butastur rufipennis*

According to Brown *et al.* (1982) the downy young of the Grasshopper Buzzard *Butastur rufipennis* is undescribed. However, Millet-Horsin (1921) obtained two living nestlings which had been taken from a nest near Kati (12°44'N, 8°4'W), Mali, on 22 June 1920. The birds lived in captivity until the following August, when they died; they were presented at a Meeting of the *Société Ornithologique de France* on 7 October 1921. Millet-Horsin described the birds as being completely white when secured. Their heads had become a bright reddish (equivalent to the bright rufous for immatures as described by Brown *et al.* 1982) at death, in contrast to the chocolate colour of the adult head.

In a subsequent account, Millet-Horsin (1922) referred to the young being buff-grey ("*gris-blond*") but it is unclear whether he was contradicting himself or referring to the birds when a little older. It is possible that the specimens decayed and were discarded in the meantime (they are not listed in the Museum of Natural History, Paris: J.-F. Voisin *in litt.*) and, if so, Millet-Horsin may have been relying on memory for the second account.

The record is apparently the first and only confirmed breeding record for the species in Mali, although Lamarche (1980) records nest-building by *B. rufipennis* south of San (13°18'N, 4°54'W) in March. Elsewhere in West Africa, there are nesting records from Nigeria in March (Elgood *et al.* 1994) and the species has twice nested in the Keran Park in northern Togo between April and June (J.F. Walsh & R.A. Cheke, unpubl.). Courtship has been seen in The Gambia, suggestive of possible breeding there also (Gore 1990).

I am grateful to Dr J.-F. Voisin for seeing if the specimens survived in Paris and to him and Dr G.J. Morel for their comments on a draft.

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Received 4 May 1995

Revised 1 August 1995

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