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building), with a southern limit in Nigeria hitherto placed at Zaria (Elgood *et al*. 1994) *c*. 180 km northwest of Jos.

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A sight record of the Brown Nightjar *Caprimulgus binotatus* in Nigeria

On the evening of 1 Mar 2002, a truck in which I was riding flushed a nightjar from the road near the village of Iko Esai, Cross River State, Nigeria. The bird settled again farther down the road and we were able to approach it closely (to about 8 m) and study it in the beam of the headlights for several minutes before it flew off.

The bird was small and very dark uniform brown above, with slightly paler underparts, a buff or off-white line on the scapulars, and a small white patch on the side of the throat. The tail was not especially long or short. In flight it showed no pale wing patches or tail corners, and the tail seemed to have a square or slightly forked tip.

Identification of nightjars by sight, especially under artificial light, is usually problematic, but in this case it was relatively straightforward. The combination of small size, dark, unvariegated coloration and lack of white in the flight feathers is diagnostic of Brown Nightjar *Caprimulgus binotatus*, a poorly known forest species not previously recorded in Nigeria (Fry *et al.* 1988, Elgood *et al*. 1994, Cleere & Nurney 1998, Borrow & Demey 2001, P. Hall pers. comm.). There are no similar species (Cleere & Nurney 1998). Although I did not see the small "ear tufts" or the "tent" shape of the tail that this species is supposed to have, and the bird did not vocalize, all other nightjars of the region could be eliminated on the basis of

coloration and habitat (forest edge in a largely forested landscape). Only a few other W African nightjars (all described below) lack pale wing patches. The female Bates's Nightjar *C. batesi*, the only other African rainforest nightjar is much larger, with more variegated plumage, and also unrecorded from Nigeria (Fry *et al.* 1988, Cleere & Nurney 1998, Borrow & Demey 2001). The female Eurasian Nightjar *C. europaeus* is a greyer bird of more open habitats and not normally found in SE Nigeria (Elgood *et al*. 1994, Borrow & Demey 2001). Egyptian Nightjar *C. aegyptius* is a pale grey species of arid habitats and unrecorded in S Nigeria (Elgood *et al*. 1994, Cleere & Nurney 1998, Borrow & Demey 2001). Standard-winged Nightjar *Macrodipteryx longipennis* is paler, has a broad rufous nuchal collar, and inhabits open savanna and farmland (Elgood *et al*. 1994, Cleere & Nurney 1998, Borrow & Demey 2001). The female Pennant-winged Nightjar *M. vexillarius* is a paler, slightly larger, grassland and open woodland species, also with a rufous nuchal collar, and not recorded in Nigeria before April (Elgood *et al*. 1994, Borrow & Demey 2001).

Brown Nightjar is thought to have a patchy distribution in lowland rainforest from Liberia to N Gabon and central Congo (Cleere & Nurney 1998, Clements 2000, Borrow & Demey 2001). There is a known population in W Cameroon extending more or less to the Nigerian border, within 80 km of Iko Esai (Borrow & Demey 2001). It is recorded from Korup National Park (Cleere & Nurney 1998), which is contiguous with Nigeria's Cross River National Park, which in turn is contiguous with the Iko Esai forest. It thus seems reasonable that the range of the above population would extend into Nigeria; in fact, the range map in Cleere & Nurney (1998) suggests that it does so. The mature, if not primary, lowland forests of Cross River State have not been studied extensively by ornithologists (Elgood *et al*. 1994, P. Hall pers. comm.). It is not surprising that a scarce, secretive species such as Brown Nightjar would escape notice until now, and it seems likely that it will prove to be distributed more continuously in mature forest throughout the region.

I wish to thank Cercopan Forest Monkey Rehabilitation and Conservation Centre (now the Centre for Education, Research, and Conservation of Primates and Nature) for facilitating, and providing logistical support during, my visit to Nigeria. Phil Hall offered commentary on my observations and encouraged the writing of this note. Two referees provided helpful suggestions and additional references.

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Minimum survival data of some tropical passerine species in Comoé National Park, Ivory Coast

Knowledge of individual life history traits such as longevity is crucial for understanding the population dynamics of birds. There are, however, few long-term studies of tropical passerines in West Africa (*e.g.* Thiollay 1970, 1971, Morel & Morel 1972, Brosset 1990) and therefore hardly any field data on longevity.

During a project on the winter ecology of Palaearctic migrants we mist-netted birds regularly in Comoé National Park, NE Ivory Coast, between mid-September and late April of 1994–5, 1995–6 and 1996–7. Some birds had already been captured during a preliminary study in Feb–Mar 1994. Afrotropical species of selected families assumed to have a similar ecology compared to some Palaearctic migrants in the area were marked either with an aluminium ring or an individual combination of colour rings. Additional mist-netting took place in the northern winters 1997–8 and 2000–1, when no Afrotropical birds were marked but recaptures from the former study were recorded. A separate project also marked birds between 1990 and 1995 (Brendle 1997) although no information about precise ringing dates could be obtained. Some of these birds were captured by us and are also included here. Here, we report minimal survival times indicated by recaptured or observed individuals of 17 Afrotropical passerine species based on these data (Table 1). The minimal survival of an individual is the difference between the first capture and the last record in days. We refrain from calculating survival rates with capture-recapture models because of the low number of recaptured birds, the uneven capture effort at various sites and the combination of different recapture methods (mistnetting *vs* colour-ring sightings).

Individuals survived up to six years in Grey-headed Bristlebill and Snowy-crowned Robin-Chat. The two individuals with the longest minimum survival were ringed by the previous project and could therefore have been up to three years older than indicated by our analyses. Excluding Beautiful Sunbird and Fork-tailed Drongo, of which only three individuals were ringed, encounter rates after at least one year were up to 18% (Northern Crombec) and at least 5% for all species. Encounter rates after at least two years were up to 10% (Puvel's Illadopsis) and after more than three years up to 3% (Snowy-crowned Robin-Chat).