

## Short Notes — Notes Courtes

### Records of African Pygmy Goose *Nettapus auritus* and a *Halcyon* kingfisher on São Tomé

On 21 July 2011, one of us (AT) observed a female African Pygmy Goose *Nettapus auritus* feeding and resting in a sheltered part of the river Io Grande, Dona Eugénia area (0.13322°N, 6.61979°E), in southeast São Tomé. The bird was observed for at least 20 min. (10h10–10h30) and several photos were taken (Fig. 1). The distinct plumage of the species and the perfect observational circumstances exclude misidentification. The African Pygmy Goose is distributed over large parts of sub-Saharan Africa, where it is largely confined to freshwater lakes, marshes and rivers (Brown *et al.* 1982, Borrow & Demey 2001). It is noted as vagrant to the islands of São Tomé and Príncipe in the Gulf of Guinea on the IUCN Red List (<<http://www.iucnredlist.org/>>, consulted Feb 2014), but to the best of our knowledge no observations have been formally reported to date. São Tomé is located c. 175 km west of the coast of Gabon, and the present record thus demonstrates the species' capability of dispersal over the sea.

The day before this observation, *i.e.* 20 July 2011, we encountered yet another unexpected bird for São Tomé: a *Halcyon* kingfisher. This observation was made during a walk along the Io Grande, close to its junction with the river Ana Chaves (0.13738°N, 6.61971°E). The bird perched on a dead branch of a tree located up the almost vertical bank of the river. Unfortunately, it was raining at the time of the observation, which, in combination with the long distance (c. 150 m), rendered detailed observations impossible. We observed clearly the typical silhouette of a *Halcyon* kingfisher, with proportionally very long bill and short tail; the belly and underparts appeared light and the back and head dark; a light patch was observed on the right wing of the bird. The Blue-breasted Kingfisher *H. malimbica* is resident on the island of Príncipe, c. 145 km northeast of São Tomé) as a local subspecies *H. m. dryas*, which is slightly larger than its mainland counterpart. It occurs in a wider range of habitats on Príncipe than on the mainland (Christy & Clark 1998). Our observation could possibly have been of this subspecies, but we can neither exclude the mainland subspecies nor other *Halcyon* species (in particular the Woodland Kingfisher *H. senegalensis*). Jones & Tye (2006) considered all previous records of *H. m. dryas* for São Tomé as subject to doubt and concluded that there was no good evidence that the species had truly occurred there; although our observation does not change this situation, it indicates a need for vigilant attention to large kingfishers seen on São Tomé.

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**Figure 1. Female African Pygmy Goose in a sheltered part of the river Io Grande, southeast São Tomé, 21 July 2011 (photo: A. Thomasson).**

### References

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### Observations ornithologiques au Sénégal et en Gambie

Pendant un voyage d'ornithologues amateurs parrainé par l'Association des Naturalistes des Yvelines (ANY, France) au Sénégal et en Gambie du 2 au 19 février 2014, les participants ont fait cinq observations particulières.

***Ciconia ciconia* Cigogne blanche.** Nous avons observé environ 1500 Cigognes blanches dans quatre groupes dans la Réserve de Baobolong (13°34'N, 15°47'W) en