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## BIRD RECORDS FROM THE REPUBLIC OF NIGER

by Robert A. Cheke, J. Frank Walsh and Lincoln D.C. Fishpool

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The Republic of Niger is a huge country, encompassing 1,187,000 km<sup>2</sup> of West Africa. Most is desert, the remainder sahel apart from some sudan savanna vegetation in the south-west. Sites of especial ornithological importance include the Air massif (the birds of which have been described by Villiers, 1950, and Bruneau de Mire, 1957) the W National Park, and a corner of Lake Chad. The W National Park is shared by three countries; it includes parts of eastern Burkina Faso and northern Benin. Grettenberger (1984) recently described the Niger part of the park, with a plea for urgent assistance to maintain conservation work there. The birds of the Niger section of the park have been documented by Koster & Grettenberger (1983). Niger is also known as the winter quarters of many species of Palaearctic migrants and part of the routes of many more. Migrant birds in the Sahara desert have been discussed by Pettet (1984) in a volume which also includes an article by Casselton (1984) on birds breeding in the Sahara.

Bannerman (1931) listed the birds collected in Niger by Bates, who later described his pioneering voyages and the birds he encountered (Bates 1933, 1934a, b, c, d). Other contributions are by Hartert (1921, 1924), Paludan (1936), Rousselot (1947), Douaud (1955), Koenig (1956), Heu (1961), Fairon (1971, 1975), Haas (1974), and Pfliehm (1981). Prompted by the request of Giraudoux (1984), we present here a compilation of the birds we have seen in Niger during a series of visits and residences between 1967 and 1984. Most of the records are from the south-western corner of the country, since the work which took us to Niger required travel between the Mali border close to the Niger River and along its course to the frontier with Benin. However, some birds were seen during field work elsewhere, including brief journeys to Agadez and the Tahoua and Maradi regions described by Cheke et al. (1980), a paper in which a few bird records were mentioned.

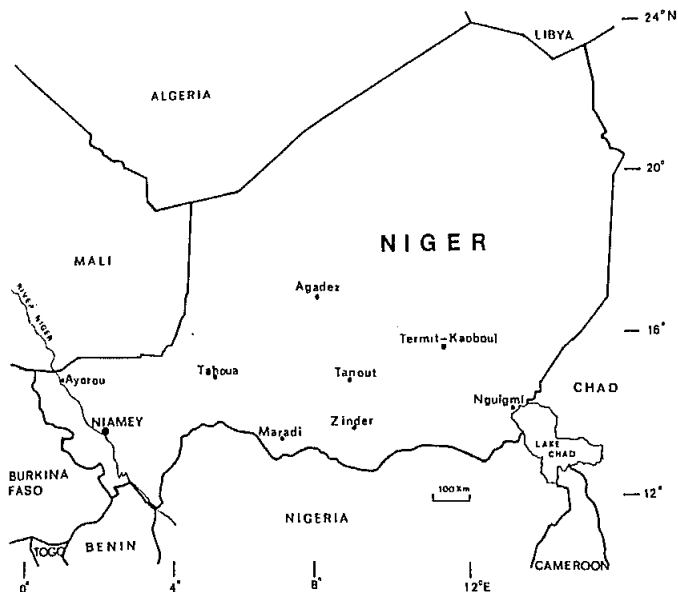
In the list which follows the nomenclature and sequence are those of Hall & Moreau (1970) and Snow (1978). Co-ordinates of localities mentioned are listed and some sites are depicted on the map (Fig. 1).

## STRUTHIONIDAE

*Struthio camelus* Ostrich Not seen by us. Ostriches were common in northern Niger until the mid 1960's when parties of 30 or 40 birds were to be seen in the area of the Falaise de Tiguigit, south of Agadez (G.B. Popov, pers. comm.). Current status unknown: rumoured to be present still, but rare.

## ANHINCIDAE

*Anhinga rufa* African Darter One at Niamey in Aug 1967.



|               |                      |                  |                      |
|---------------|----------------------|------------------|----------------------|
| ABALAK        | 15° 27' N, 06° 17' E | KAKOU            | 13° 11' N, 01° 07' E |
| AGADEZ        | 16° 58' N, 07° 59' E | KANDI (BENIN)    | 11° 08' N, 02° 56' E |
| ALFASSI       | 13° 19' N, 01° 02' E | KOMPARTI         | 12° 00' N, 03° 12' E |
| AYOROU        | 14° 44' N, 00° 55' E | LABEZANGA (MALI) | 14° 57' N, 00° 43' E |
| BAKIN BIRJI   | 14° 16' N, 08° 48' E | MARADI           | 13° 58' N, 07° 06' E |
| BANI BANGOU   | 15° 03' N, 02° 42' E | MAYAHI           | 13° 58' N, 07° 40' E |
| BEYLANDE      | 12° 45' N, 02° 52' E | MEANA            | 14° 24' N, 01° 08' E |
| BIKINI        | 12° 25' N, 02° 47' E | NIAMEY           | 13° 32' N, 02° 08' E |
| BIRNI N'KONNI | 13° 48' N, 05° 16' E | SAGAFONDO        | 13° 35' N, 01° 57' E |
| BOSSE BANGOU  | 13° 21' N, 01° 18' E | SAY              | 13° 07' N, 02° 21' E |
| DOGONDOUTCHI  | 13° 38' N, 04° 02' E | TAGALAL          | 14° 46' N, 06° 18' E |
| DOSO          | 13° 03' N, 03° 12' E | TAHOUA           | 14° 54' N, 05° 16' E |
| FAMALE        | 14° 33' N, 01° 04' E | TANCOUT          | 14° 58' N, 08° 53' E |
| FIRGOUN       | 14° 48' N, 00° 53' E | TAPOA            | 12° 29' N, 02° 25' E |
| GARBEE-KOUROU | 13° 44' N, 01° 36' E | TILLABERY        | 14° 13' N, 01° 27' E |
| GAYA          | 11° 53' N, 03° 27' E | TORODI           | 13° 18' N, 01° 40' E |
| GOHIEYE       | 13° 52' N, 01° 34' E | TOUNGA           | 12° 42' N, 02° 28' E |
| ILLELA        | 14° 28' N, 05° 15' E | YERI             | 12° 14' N, 02° 24' E |
| IN GALL       | 16° 47' N, 06° 56' E | ZINDER           | 13° 48' N, 08° 59' E |
| ISSAWAN       | 14° 00' N, 07° 55' E |                  |                      |

Figure 1 Map and gazetteer of Niger

## PHALACROCORACIDAE

*Phalacrocorax africanus* Peed Cormorant A few near Niamey in Aug 1967, June and July 1977. Also noted near Tapoa in Apr 1977 and at Gaya in June 1977. A juvenile at Firgoun in Sept 1984.

## PELECANIDAE

*Pelecanus rufescens* Pink-backed Pelican Three on the Niger at 12°20'N on 5 Apr 1977.

## ARDEIDAE

*Nycticorax nycticorax* Black-crowned Night Heron Near Tapoa on 4 Apr 1977 and 40 near Tillabery on 21 Sept 1984.

*Bubulcus ibis* Cattle Egret Abundant along the Niger between Gaya and Gotheye from June until Oct. In Aug 1967 a large breeding colony was seen near Niamey, amongst which Abdim's Storks *Ciconia abdimii* and Village Weavers *Ploceus cucullatus* were also breeding. On 3 Oct 1977 about 50 were seen feeding on the grasshopper *Oedaleus senegalensis* at Maradi (Cheke et al. 1980); next day four were seen flying, at midday with their bills open, near Issawan. Many more probable migrants were seen on the next day; 250 at a water-hole 40 km north of Zinder, 20 near Tanout and 10 at an oasis 130 km south of Agadez. On 23 Sept 1984 one at Ayorou was seen eating a toad.

*Ardeola ralloides* Squacco Heron Three near Niamey on 18 June 1977, a few in the Tapoa area in Apr 1977 and June 1984 and many in the Say region in Sept 1984.

*Butorides striatus* Little Green Heron One near Niamey in Aug 1967 and June 1977. Seen in the Tapoa area in Apr 1977, June and July 1984.

*Egretta garzetta* Little Egret Twenty six at Bose Bangou on 11 July 1984. Single birds beside the Niger during 1984 at Gotheye (11 Aug), near Sagafondo (19 Sept) and near Ayorou (23 Sept).

*E. intermedia* Yellow-billed Egret One near Niamey on 12 Aug 1984.

*E. alba* Great White Egret Abundant along the Niger and other rivers as far north as Tillabery. More than 2,000 including flocks of 300 and 500 between Tapoa and the Nigerian border in Apr 1977. One near Zinder on 4 Oct 1977 and another at Ayorou on 23 Sept 1984.

*Ardea cinerea* Grey Heron Abundant along the Niger and other rivers. More than 1,000 including flocks of 200 between Tapoa and the Nigerian frontier on 5 Apr 1977.

*A. purpurea* Purple Heron In 1984 near Yeri on 6 June (one bird), pairs at Say on 19 Sept, near Ayorou on 23 Sept and a singleton near Tillabery on 21 Sept.

*A. goliath* Goliath Heron One near Bikini in Sept 1984.

*A. melanocephala* Black-headed Heron A few along the Niger from Gaya to Ayorou during wet seasons. A small breeding colony at Gaya in June 1977.

## SCOPIDAE

*Scopus umbretta* Hammerkop Near Tapoa in Apr 1977 and Sept 1984 and near Yeri in June 1984.

## CICONIIDAE

*Ciconia ciconia* White Stork One 40 km north of Abalak on 7 Oct 1977 and two 10 km north-west of Niamey on 20 Sept 1984. Giraudoux (1978) described a site 18 km east of Zinder where 500-600 used to over-winter and where they fell prey to trappers. One of two ringed birds he found had been marked as a nestling in Morocco.

*C. abdimii* Abdim's Stork In Aug 1967 the species was common in Niamey and nested in dead trees in the city, where a pair was also seen building on 11 July 1984. On 12 June 1977 one was carrying food near Niamey and at least three pairs were nesting in a large tree beside the Niger at Say. On 21 June 1977 a pair was nesting 10 m up in a Baobab tree there, but none remained by 29 Oct. Earlier, probable migrants had been seen as follows: many flocks of 50 to 100 birds at water-holes near Zinder on 4 Oct, more than fifty 40 km north of Zinder the next day and a flock of 250 flying east 8 km west of Birni N'konni on 9 Oct and 60 soaring in a thermal 2 km away. In July 1978 several active nests were seen between Tillabery and Ayorou. Earliest record at Niamey was two on 29 Apr 1978 and the latest was four at the airport on 2 Oct 1977. Other possible migrants include 15 near Komparti on 19 Sept 1984, 3 at Garbey-Kourou on 21 Sept 1984, a single bird at Ayorou on 22 Sept 1984 and a flock of 100 at 13°40'N, 1°35'E in the Sirba valley on 2 Oct 1976.

*C. episcopus* Woolly-necked Stork A few pairs in the Sirba valley at 13°15'N in Oct 1976. Common along the Niger between Tapoa and the Nigerian frontier in Apr 1977.

*Ephippiorhynchus senegalensis* Saddlebill Stork A pair in the Sirba valley at 13°10'N, 01°10'E on 2 Oct 1976. An adult and an immature near Yeri on 5 Apr 1977 and one there on 6 June 1984.

*Leptoptilos crumeniferus* Marabou Stork More than 20 near Tapoa on 5 Apr 1977.

*Mycteria ibis* Yellow-billed Stork Five beside the Niger between Tapoa and the Nigerian frontier on 5 Apr 1977.

## THRESKIORNITHIDAE

*Threskiornis aethiopica* Sacred Ibis On 19 Dec 1976 between 50 and 100 birds roosted on an island in the Niger a few km south of Niamey. One 10 km south of Tanout on 5 Oct 1977. Two near Tillabery and 3 near Ayorou on 21 Sept 1984. Ten near Ayorou on 23 Sept 1984.

*Bostrychia hagedash* Hadada One near Yeri on 5 Apr 1977 and 6 June 1984. One at Tapoa on 4 Apr 1977 and another near Ayorou on 23 Sept 1984.

*Plegadis falcinellus* Glossy Ibis One south of Ayorou on 2 Aug 1978 and 7 flying south at Tounga on 19 Sept 1984.

## ANATIDAE

*Dendrocygna bicolor* Fulvous Whistling Duck Ten near Niamey on 31 July 1977.

*D. viduata* White-faced Whistling Duck Common along the Niger from the Nigerian border to Ayorou.

*Anas acuta* Pintail Four south of Say on 19 Sept 1984 and two near Tillabery on 21 Sept 1984.

*Plectropterus gambensis* Spur-winged Goose Common along the Niger from Gaya to Ayorou. One at Dogondoutchi in Aug 1977.

*Sarkidiornis melanotos* Knob-billed Goose Singles near Gaya in Apr and June 1977 and 25 near Niamey in July 1977.

## ACCIPITRIDAE

*Gypohierax angolensis* Palm-nut Vulture One east of Tapoa at 11°48'N, in Apr 1977 and in Sept 1984.

*Gyps rueppellii* Ruppell's Griffon Vulture One at Niamey in Aug 1967. One in the Sirba valley at 13°10'N, 01°30'E in Oct 1976. Ten feeding on a freshly-dead donkey 30 km north of Bakin Birji on 5 Oct 1977 and ten 40 km north of Abalak on 7 Oct 1977. Two in the Yeri region in June 1984. One north of Tounga and another near Meana in Sept 1984.

*G. africanus* White-backed Vulture One near Tapoa in Apr 1977 and two near Yeri in June 1984.

*Necrosyrtes monachus* Hooded Vulture Common in small numbers at Niamey in Aug 1967. In 1977 recorded from Birni N'konni, Tapoa, Torodi and Zinder. Seen near Tounga and at Torodi in 1984.

*Terathopius ecaudatus* Bateleur One at Tapoa in Apr 1977. One 120 km south-west of Niamey in Aug 1977. Three near Yeri in June 1984 and one at Tapoa in July 1984.

*Circus* sp. Harrier A ringtail near Ayorou on 23 Sept 1984.

*Circaetus cinereus* Brown Snake Eagle One south of Yeri on 6 June 1984.

*Accipiter badius* Shikra Common at Niamey in Aug 1967 and one near there in July 1977 and in Aug 1984. One near Dogondoutchi in Aug 1977 and another 40 km north of Gaya in Aug 1984.

*Melierax metabates* Dark Chanting Goshawk One 32 km south of Niamey in Aug 1967. Singles at Dogondoutchi in Aug 1977 and Tagalal in Oct 1977. One near Garbey-Kourou in Aug and Sept 1984.

*Micronisus gabar* Gabar Goshawk One near Tillabery in July 1978.

*Kaupifalco monogrammicus* Lizard Buzzard Often seen between Gaya and Dosso.

*Buteo auguralis* Red-tailed Buzzard One near Tagalal on 8 Oct 1977, two near Dosso on an unrecorded date and one 40 km west of Garbey-Kourou on 19 Sept 1984.

*Butastur rufipennis* Grasshopper Buzzard One at Tapoa on 4 Apr 1977. One near Illéla on 14 Aug 1977. Two near Bakin Birji on 5 Oct 1977. Two 20 km south of Tahoua on 9 Oct 1977. Common in Niger between Gaya and Dosso on 10 Aug 1984, a date when none had been seen in Benin on the way north. One at Garbey-Kourou on 19 Sept 1984.

*Polemaetus bellicosus* Martial Eagle One at Tapoa in Apr 1977 and another 50 km south of Bani-Bangou in Sept 1977.

*Aquila rapax* Tawny Eagle One near Yeri in June 1984.

*Haliaetus vocifer* African Fish Eagle Two beside the Niger (one near Tapoa and the other south of Say) and two beside the Sirba river (one at Kakou and another 45 km west of Garbey-Kourou) on 19 Sept 1984. One beside the Faga river near Alfassi the next day.

*Milvus migrans* Black Kite The earliest record at Niamey was 18 June 1977 and the latest a group of 50 at the airport on 2 Oct 1976. However on 9 Oct 1977 six were seen 100 km south of Tahoua. The day before some were seen near Tagalal feeding on the grasshopper *Oedaleus senegalensis* and the species was also noted 50 km north of Tahoua. Other northern records include a dozen at Ayorou on 19 July 1978 and one there on 22 Sept 1984.

*Elanus caeruleus* Black-shouldered Kite Three in the Niamey area in Aug 1967 and one on 12 June 1977. Recorded from Gaya on 21 June 1977 and 10 Aug 1984. One 30 km south of Tanout on 5 Oct 1977 and another near Tagalal on 8 Oct 1977.

#### FALCONIDAE

*Falco peregrinus* Peregrine One near Garbey-Kourou on 11 Aug 1984.

*F. biarmicus* Lanner Falcon A pair at Ayorou in July 1978 and a male there in Sept 1984.

*F. ardosiaceus* Grey Kestrel One at Tapoa in Apr 1977.

#### SAGITTARIIDAE

*Sagittarius serpentarius* Secretary Bird One 30 km south of Bani-Bangou in Sept 1977.

#### PHASIANIDAE

*Fringilla bicalcaratus* Double-spurred Francolin Near Niamey in June and July and at Tapoa in Apr 1977.

*Ptilopachus petrosus* Stone Partridge At Tapoa in Apr 1977.

## NUMIDIDAE

*Numida meleagris* Helmeted Guineafowl Abundant between Dosso and Gaya in June 1977. Also recorded from Tapoa in Apr and Dogondoutchi in Aug 1977.

## HELIORNITHIDAE

*Podica senegalensis* Finfoot One in the Sirba river close to the border with Burkina Faso, west of Kakou on 20 Sept 1984.

## GRUIDAE

*Balearica pavonina* Crowned Crane The only record away from water was of two birds seen 40 km north of Abalak on 7 Oct 1977. In 1978 about 20 roosted in trees at Famale, south of Ayorou, on 15 May and one was seen 14 km north of Ayorou on 17 July. The healthy state of the species' populations along the Niger was confirmed on 21 Sept 1984 when 86 were counted between Gotheye and Ayorou. A pair near Bose Bangou in July and Sept 1984 and up to 11 at Torodi, also in Sept 1984. One in the W National Park in June and Sept 1984.

## OTIDIDAE

*Eupodotis melanogaster* Black-bellied Bustard Singles 80 km south-west of Niamey on 28 Aug 1977 and 15 km north of Gaya on 10 Aug 1984.

*Otis arabs* Arabian Bustard A pair near Kakou on 19 Sept 1984.

## JACANIDAE

*Actophilornis africana* Jacana Very common beside the Niger in Aug 1967, when a flock of 200 were seen near Niamey. Scattered records from the Nigerian frontier to Ayorou in subsequent years.

## BURHINIDAE

*Burhinus senegalensis* Senegal Thick-knee One near Illela in Aug 1977 and ten on an island in the Niger in the Niamey area in Sept 1984.

## CHARADRIIDAE

*Vanellus albiceps* Black-shouldered Wattled Plover Thirty near Niamey in Aug 1967. Also near Tapoa in Apr 1977, south of Yeri at 12°12'N in June 1984 and near Gotheye in Aug 1984.

*V. senegallus* Senegal Wattled Plover Seen near Tapoa in July 1984.

*V. spinosus* Spur-winged Plover Common beside the Niger from the Nigerian frontier to Ayorou. Probably bred near Niamey in June and July 1977 when a pair were seen bleating, defending territories and mobbing Black Kites (*Milvus migrans*) and Abdim's Storks (*Ciconia abdimii*). Also noted 10 km north of Tanout and 120 km south of Agadez on 5 Oct 1977 and one at Abalak two days later.



*V. tectus* Black-headed Plover Several at Niamey airport on 2 Oct 1976 and one there on 11 July 1984. At least three pairs near Illela on 13 Aug 1977.

*Charadrius marginatus* White-fronted Sand Plover One near Niamey on 31 July 1977.

#### SCOLOPACIDAE

*Tringa erythropus* Spotted Redshank Two near Fircoun on 23 Sept 1984.

*T. nebularia* Greenshank One near Fircoun on 23 Sept 1984.

*T. hypoleucos* Common Sandpiper Beside the Niger River between the Nigerian frontier and Tapoa in Apr 1977. Singletons also at Tapoa and along the Niger as far north as Ayorou in Aug and Sept 1984.

*Philomachus pugnax* Ruff Thirty flying north along the Niger near Gotheye on 11 Aug 1984 and 43 seen in the Fircoun area on 23 Sept 1984.

*Limosa limosa* Black-tailed Godwit About 50, beside the Niger, near Gaya on 5 Apr 1977.

#### RECURVORISTRIDAE

*Himantopus himantopus* Black-winged Stilt One 10 km north of Tanout on 5 Oct 1977.

#### ROSTRATULIDAE

*Rostratula benghalensis* Painted Snipe A pair at Tapoa on 5 Apr 1977

#### GLAREOLIDAE

*Pluvianus aegyptius* Egyptian Plover Common beside the Niger from the Nigerian frontier to Ayorou.

*Cursorius cursor* Cream-coloured Courser One 50 km west of Agadez on 7 Oct 1977.

*Glareola pratincola* Common Pratincole About 20 beside the Niger River between the Nigerian frontier and Tapoa on 5 Apr 1977. Ten hawking at dusk at Ayorou on 21 Sept 1984 and 79 counted near Fircoun two days later. Sixty-nine of these were in a single group, settling to roost on an island in the middle of the river.

*G. nuchalis* Rock Pratincola Six on a rocky islet between Ayorou and Fircoun on 23 Sept 1984.

*G. cinerea* Grey Pratincole Several beside the Niger between the Nigerian frontier and Tapoa on 5 Apr 1977.

## LARIDAE

*Hydroprogne tschegrava* Caspian Tern One near Gaya on 5 Apr 1977.

*Sterna albifrons* Little Tern One at Gaya on 21 June 1977.

*S. leucoptera* White-winged Black Tern Three flying north up the Niger at Niamey on 12 Aug 1967 and seven north of Ayorou on 23 Sept 1984.

*Rhynchops flavirostris* African Skimmer Sixteen flying north up the Niger at Niamey on 11 Aug 1967 and two flocks seen along the same river between Tapoa and the Nigerian frontier on 5 Apr 1977.

## PTEROCLIDIDAE

*Pterocles exustus* Chestnut-bellied Sandgrouse Near Agadez on 7 Oct 1977.

*P. quadricinctus* Four-banded Sandgrouse Pairs at Tapoa on 4 Apr 1977 and 19 Sept 1984. Also near Niamey in June and July 1977.

## COLUMBIDAE

*Columba guinea* Speckled Pigeon Common at Niamey. Also noted at Birni N'konni, Garbey-Kourou, Ayorou and Tapoa.

*Streptopelia vinacea* Vinaceous Turtle Dove At Tapoa in Apr 1977, Gaya in June 1977 and Tounga in Sept 1984.

*S. roseogrisea* Pink-headed Dove Garbey-Kourou and Ayorou in Sept 1984. Bates (1934b) recorded the species at Say.

*S. decipiens* Mourning Collared Dove At Niamey in Aug 1967 and July 1977.

*S. semitorquata* Red-eyed Turtle Dove At Niamey in Aug 1967 and at Tapoa in Apr 1977.

*S. senegalensis* Laughing Dove Recorded at Ayorou, Dogondoutchi, Gaya, Niamey and Tapoa.

*Turtur abyssinicus* Black-billed Wood Dove At Niamey in Aug 1967 and June 1977. At Gaya in June 1977.

*Oena capensis* Masked Dove Recorded from Tapoa (5 Apr 1977), Niamey (18 June 1977), Dogondoutchi (15 Aug 1977), 45 km north of Bakin Birji (5 Oct 1977), 150 km south of Agadez (5 Oct 1977), Tillabery (15 July 1978), Garbey-Kourou (19 Sept 1984) and Ayorou (21 Sept 1984).

*Treron waalia* Yellow-bellied Fruit Pigeon At Tapoa on 5 Apr 1977.

## PSITTACIDAE

*Poicephalus senegalus* Senegal Parrot At Tapoa in Apr 1977 and at Gaya in Aug 1977.

*Psittacula krameri* Rose-ringed Parakeet At Gaya in June 1977 and Aug 1984 and at Yeri in June 1984.

#### MUSOPHAGIDAE

*Crinifer piscator* Grey Turaco One 40 km south-west of Niamey in Oct 1977, two at Gaya in Sept 1978 and at Yeri in June 1984.

#### CUCULIDAE

*Clamator glandarius* Great Spotted Cuckoo Singles at Niamey on 11 Aug 1967 and Garbey-Kourou on 19 Sept 1984.

*C. jacobinus* Pied Crested Cuckoo One at Niamey on 12 Aug 1967 and two at Gaya on 21 June 1977.

*C. levaillantii* Striped Cuckoo One at Niamey on 31 July 1977.

*Cuculus gularis* Grey Cuckoo At Yeri on 6 June 1984.

*Centropus senegalensis* Senegal Coucal At Niamey in June-Aug 1977, Gaya (June 1977), Beylande (July 1977) and Tapoa (Apr 1977).

#### CAPRIMULGIDAE

*Caprimulgus climacurus* Long-tailed Nightjar Many flushed from the main Niamey-Ouagadougou road, on both sides of the Burkina Faso border on 28 July 1977.

*Macrodipteryx longipennis* Standard-winged Nightjar About 40 at Niamey airport on 19 Dec 1969 (D.J. & Y.C. Cheke, pers. comm.). Three of 20 night-jar corpses examined near Gaya on 10 Aug 1984 were of this species.

#### APODIDAE

*Telacanthura ussheri* Mottled Spinetail Seen at Yeri on 6 June 1984.

*Cypsiurus parvus* Palm Swift Recorded from Ayorou, Gaya, Niamey and Tapoa.

*Apus apus* European Swift One at Illéla on 13 Aug 1977, one at Gotheye on 11 Aug 1984, two at Garbey-Kourou on 21 Sept 1984 and six at Ayorou two days later.

*A. affinis* Little Swift Common at Niamey in Aug 1967. Also seen at Zinder (Oct 1977), Yeri (June 1984) and Ayorou (Sept 1984).

#### COLIIDAE

*Colius macrourus* Blue-naped Mousebird One at Ayorou in July 1978 and five there in Sept 1984.

## ALCEDINIDAE

*Ceryle maxima* Giant Kingfisher One at Tapoa on 5 Apr 1977.

*C. rudis* Pied Kingfisher Common along the banks of the Niger from Gaya to Ayorou. One at a lake 30 km south of Tahoua in Oct 1977.

*Alcedo cristata* Malachite Kingfisher Singles at Tapoa on 5 Apr 1977 and Gaya on 21 June 1977.

*Halcyon leucocephala* Grey-headed Kingfisher Singles at Niamey on 13 Aug 1967, 12 and 18 June 1977 and 11 July 1977. One near Birni N'konni on 15 Aug 1977.

*H. malimbica* Blue-breasted Kingfisher One at Tapoa on 5 Apr 1977.

## MEROPIDAE

*Merops bulocki* Red-throated Bee-eater Singles at Tapoa in Apr 1977, Gaya in June 1977 and at Ayorou in July 1978.

*M. pusillus* Little Bee-eater Common near Niamey in Aug 1967. Six there on 12 June 1977 and present also on 18 June, 11 and 31 July and 12 Oct, when one was netted. The bird's wing length was 73 mm, it was in wing moult, weighed 14.9 g and no parasites were found in a smear of its blood (Pierce 1984). On 23 Sept 1984 ten or more roosted in thick vegetation beside the Niger at Ayorou.

*M. orientalis* Little Green Bee-eater Singles at Tapoa (Apr 1977), Niamey (Aug 1977), Birni N'konni (Aug 1977) and six at Ayorou (Sept 1984).

*M. albicollis* White-throated Bee-eater Two at Niamey on 6 Aug 1977 and three separate birds near In Gall on 7 Oct 1977.

*M. nubicus* Carmine Bee-eater At Tapoa on 5 Apr 1977. Hundreds going to roost in parties of 20 or 30 at Famale on 21 May 1977. Common at Gaya on 21 June 1977. In 1977 the population foraging from telephone wires beside the road between Dogondoutchi and Birni N'konni was censused four times: 698 were counted on 12 Aug, 702 on 15 Aug but only 121 on 2 Oct and 139 on 9 Oct. The Oct birds were all in the section nearest Birni N'konni. In July 1977 the species was abundant between Tillabery and Ayorou, where a flock was seen feeding on first and second instar nymphs of the grasshopper *Oedaleus senegalensis* (Cheke et al. 1980). One near Torodi on 20 Sept 1984 and at Yeri on 6 June 1984. Beside the Mekrou river at 12°05'N a colony of more than 500 holes, the highest concentration of *M. nubicus* ever seen by the observer (J.F.W.), was found on 6 June 1984. Another big colony was seen on the same date beside the Mekrou at 11°59'N, which is probably the one listed in appendix 4 of Fry (1984). On the basis that observers travel by road and in the dry season, Fry surmised that his appendix probably listed only 10% of the true number of colonies and estimated that the total population in Africa could be as much as 5 million. Both R.A.C. and J.F.W. have surveyed many rivers in West Africa by air and from the ground in the wet season and have not found many unknown colonies, upon which basis we consider Fry's figure likely to be an over-estimate.

## CORACIIDAE

*Coracias abyssinica* Abyssinian Roller Common near Niamey in Aug 1967. In 1977 they were also common there in June but had disappeared in mid-July. Other records from Gaya (21 June and 10 Aug 1984 - the latter being the first seen on a drive north from Kandi in Benin), 40 km north of Zinder and 150 km south of Agadez on 5 Oct 1977, 60 km north-east of Abalak on 7 Oct 1977 and Ayorou (12 July 1978 and 24 Sept 1984).

*C. naevia* Rufous-crowned Roller Seen at Tapoa on 5 Apr 1977, 30 km south-west of Niamey on 28 Aug 1977 and at Yeri on 6 June 1984.

*Eurystomus glaucurus* Broad-billed Roller Singles at Gaya (4 Sept 1978 and 10 Aug 1984) and at Kakou on 20 Sept 1984.

## PHOENICULIDAE

*Phoeniculus purpureus* Green Wood-hoopoe Three 30 km north of Gaya on 10 Aug 1984.

## UPUPIDAE

*Upupa epops* Hoopoe Singles seen at Dogondoutchi (15 Aug 1977), Abalak (7 Oct 1977), Tillabery (15 July 1978) and Ayorou (24 Sept 1984).

## RUCEROTIDAE

*Tockus erythrorhynchus* Red-billed Hornbill Recorded from Ayorou (Sept 1984), Gaya (June 1977), Niamey (Aug 1967) and Tapoa (Apr 1977).

*T. nasutus* Grey Hornbill Recorded from Ayorou (18 July 1978), 150 km south of Agadez (5 Oct 1977), Dogondoutchi (15 Aug 1977), Niamey (13 Aug 1967), Tanout (5 Oct 1977) and Tapoa (5 Apr 1977 and 11 July 1984).

## CAPITONIDAE

*Lybius dubius* Bearded Barbet One 45 km north of Gaya in Aug 1984.

*L. vieilloti* Vieillot's Barbet One at Gaya in Sept 1978.

## PICIDAE

*Dendropicos goertae* Grey Woodpecker A pair near Niamey on 18 June 1977.

## ALAUDIDAE

*Alaemon alaudipes* Hoopoe Lark One near Illela on 1 Aug 1977 and another at Agadez on 6 Oct 1977.

*Eremopterix nigriceps* White-fronted Finch Lark Singles 80 km and 30 km north-east of Abalak in Oct 1977.

*E. leucotis* Chestnut-backed Finch Lark. Six near Illéla in Aug 1977. Abundant in the sahel north of Tanout in Oct 1977. A pair at Gotheye in Aug 1984 and four at Garbey-Kourou in Sept 1984.

#### HIRUNDINIDAE

*Hirundo smithii* Wire-tailed Swallow At Tapoa on 5 Apr 1977 and Dogondoutchi on 15 Aug 1977.

*H. aethiopica* A pair nested in a house at Ayorou in July 1978. Bates (1934d) secured a specimen at Gao in Mali, a record omitted by Hall and Moreau, although Bannerman (1939) mentioned it together with Bates' observations of the species even further west.

*H. rustica* European Swallow One at Firgoun on 23 Sept 1984.

*H. leucosoma* Pied-winged Swallow Three at Tapoa on 5 Apr 1977.

*H. daurica* Red-rumped Swallow Present at Yeri on 6 June 1984.

*H. senegalensis* Mosque Swallow One at Ayorou on 22 Sept 1984.

*H. abyssinica* Lesser Striped Swallow Recorded from Gaya (21 June 1977) and Yeri (6 June 1984).

#### MOTACILLIDAE

*Motacilla aguimp* African Pied Wagtail One at Sagafondo, between Niamey and Gotheye, on 19 Sept 1984.

*M. flava* Yellow Wagtail Beside the Niger between the Nigerian border and Tapoa on 5 Apr 1977.

#### CAMPEPHAGIDAE

*Campephaga phoenicea* Red-shouldered Cuckoo-shrike One at Gaya on 22 June 1977.

#### PYCNONOTIDAE

*Pycnonotus barbatus* Black-headed Bulbul Recorded from Niamey (July 1977) and Tapoa (Apr 1977).

#### LANIIDAE

*Prionops plumata* Common Helmet-shrike Flocks seen at Tapoa (Apr 1977) and 60 km north of Gaya (Aug 1984).

*Tchagra senegala* Black-headed Tchagra At Tapoa (Apr 1977) and 75 km south-east of Dosso (Sept 1978).

*Laniarius barbarus* Crimson Boubou More than one present at Yeri in June 1984.

*Lanius senator* Woodchat Shrike One near Tagalal on 8 Oct 1977.

*L. excubitor* Great Grey Shrike Common in the Agadez area in Oct 1977, where one was seen chasing two desert locusts (*Schistocerca gregaria*). Southernmost record: 10 km north of Abalak on 7 Oct 1977.

*Corvinella corvina* Long-tailed Shrike Recorded at Tapoa (Apr 1977), Torodi (July 1984) and 30 km north of Gaya (Aug 1984).

#### TURDIDAE

*Oenanthe leucopyga* White-rumped Wheatear One 60 km south of Agadez and another at Agadez on 6 Oct 1977.

*O. oenanthe* Wheatear One at Issawan on 4 Oct 1977, two 40 km north of Zinder the next day and several 40 km north-east of In Gall on 7 Oct 1977.

*Mymecocichla aethiops* Ant-eating Chat Near Illela in Aug 1977 and in the Issawan area in Oct 1977.

#### TIMALIIDAE

*Turdoides plebejus* Brown Babbler Flocks at Tapoa in Apr 1977 and 25 km north of Gaya in Aug 1984.

#### SYLVIIDAE

*Sylvia communis* Whitethroat One, singing, amongst Down palms (*Hyphaene thebaica*) in *Cenchrus biflorus* grassland 5 km south of Mayahi on 3 Oct 1977.

*Hippolais pallida* Olivaceous Warbler Singles at Tapoa on 5 Apr 1977 and Ayorou on 24 Sept 1984.

*Phylloscopus trochilus* Willow Warbler Seen at Tapoa on 5 Apr 1977 and at Tahoua on 8 Oct 1977.

*Cisticola brachyptera* Siffling Cisticola At Tapoa in July 1984.

*Camaroptera brevicaudata* Grey-backed Camaroptera At Tapoa in Apr 1977.

*Eremomela pusilla* Green-backed Eremomela At Tapoa in Apr 1977.

*Sylvietta brachyura* Nuthatch Warbler One near Labezanga on the Niger side of the border on 16 Aug 1978.

#### NECTARINIIDAE

*Anthreptes platurus* Pigmy Long-tailed Sunbird Singles at Niamey on 19 Dec 1969 (D.J. Cheke pers. comm.), Tapoa (5 Apr 1977) and Torodi (11 July 1984).

*Nectarinia pulchella* Beautiful Long-tailed Sunbird Single males seen at Niamey (11 Aug 1967, 14 July 1978), Tapoa (5 Apr 1977), Gaya (22 June 1977), 40 km north of Tahoua (8 Oct 1977) and at Ayorou (17 and 19 July 1978, when seen feeding on flowers of *Commiphora* sp., and 23 Sept 1984).

*N. senegalensis* Scarlet-breasted Sunbird At Tapoa on 5 Apr 1977 and a pair 30 km north of Gaya on 10 Aug 1984.

#### EMBERIZIDAE

*Emberiza tahapisi* Cinnamon-breasted Rock-hunting Noted at Tapoa on 5 Apr 1977. A pair at Ayorou on 15 July 1978 and present at Gotheye on 11 Aug 1984.

#### FRINGILLIDAE

*Serinus mozambicus* Yellow-fronted Canary At Tapoa in Apr 1977 and at Gaya in June 1977.

#### PLOCEIDAE

*Ploceus cucullatus* Village Weaver Recorded from Gaya, Niamey and Ayorou, where an active colony was noted on 21 Sept 1984.

*P. melanocephalus* Black-headed Weaver A colony was observed on the west bank of the Niger opposite Niamey from June to Oct 1977. On the evening of 12 Oct a small sample were mist-netted. Wing lengths of 11 females ranged from 65 to 72 mm (mean = 67.73; S.D. = 2.57) and of 17 males from 70 to 76 mm (mean = 72.65; S.D. = 1.58). Female weights ranged from 17.0 to 21.1 g (mean = 19.05; S.D. = 1.66) and male weights from 20.1 to 25.0 g (mean = 2.47; S.D. = 1.19). Three immature males had pale irises and one adult male was in full wing moult. Blood smears were taken from 28 of the birds but no parasites were found (Peirce 1984). The species was common elsewhere along the Niger, north of Niamey.

*P. heuglini* Heuglin's Masked Weaver A male at Ayorou on 22 Sept 1984.

*P. luteolus* Slender-billed Weaver A male at Niamey on 12 Aug 1967 and one near Gotheye on 11 Aug 1984.

*Euplectes franciscanus* Red Bishop A male near Niamey on 12 Aug 1967.

*E. afer* Yellow-crowned Bishop Common near Niamey, also noted at Gotheye (Aug 1984) and Ayorou (Sept 1984).

*Quelea quelea* Red-billed Quelea Control measures were being taken against this species at Bani-Rangou on 4 Sept 1977. On 25 Sept 1984 two flocks of about 100 birds each were seen 60 km south of Ayorou.

*Passer griseus* Grey-headed Sparrow Common at Ayorou, Gotheye, Niamey and Yeri.

*Petronia dentata* Bush Sparrow At Tapoa in Apr 1977.



*Eubalornis albirostris* Buffalo Weaver Active breeding colonies in Aug and Sept at Niamey, Gotheye, Garbey-Kourou and 73 km north of Gaya.

*Vidua orientalis* Broad-tailed Paradise Whydah Males seen at Gaya on 21 June 1977 and near Dogondoutchi on 15 Aug 1977.

*Hypochera ?chalybeata* Indigo Bird At Ayorou, Niamey and Tapoa.

#### ESTRILIDAE

*Lagonosticta senegala* Senegal Firefinch Abundant. Noted at Agadez, Ayorou (feeding young in a nest, late Sept 1984), Gaya, Gotheye, Niamey and Tapoa.

*Uraeginthus bengalus* Red-cheeked Cordon-Rleu Near Niamey in Aug 1967 and at Gaya in June 1977.

*Estrilda troglodytes* Black-rumped Waxbill Recorded from Gaya (June 1977) and Gotheye (Aug 1984).

*E. melpoda* Orange-cheeked Waxbill Four at Gaya on 4 Sept 1978.

*Lonchura malabrica* Warbling Silverbill At Tapoa on 5 Apr 1977.

#### STURNIDAE

*Lamprotornis caudatus* Long-tailed Glossy Starling Seen in small numbers along the Niger River: e.g. 30 km north of Gaya (Aug and Sept 1984), Tapoa (Apr 1977) and 20 at Labezanga in Aug 1978. Also one east of Kakou in Sept 1984.

*L. purpureus* Purple Glossy Starling Noted at Gaya (June 1977) and Tapoa (Apr 1977). A juvenile at Ayorou in Sept 1984.

*Spreo pulcher* Chestnut-bellied Starling Common near Niamey in Aug 1967 and seen there and at Dogondoutchi in Aug 1977. On 30 May 1978 one was seen feeding on the grasshopper *Oedaleus senegalensis* 32 km north of Tillabery.

#### DICRURIDAE

*Dicrurus adsimilis* Glossy-backed Drongo Seen near Gaya.

#### CORVIDAE

*Ptilostomus afer* Black Magpie Common at Niamey in Aug 1967 and Dec 1969 (D.J. Cheke pers. comm.). Also seen between Gaya and Reylande (Apr-July 1977).

*Corvus ruficollis* Brown-necked Raven Two 120 km south of Agadez on 5 Oct 1977 and the species was present in Agadez itself, the next day. On 7 Oct another was seen 40 km west of the town.

*C. albus* Pied Crow Common. Seen at Abalak, Agadez, Ayorou, Birni N'konni, Garbey-Kourou, Gaya, Gotheye, In Gall, Niamey, Say and Tapoa.

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#### SUMMARY

Records of 188 species seen in Niger between 1967 and 1984 are given.

#### RÉSUMÉ

Renseignements sur 188 espèces vus au Niger entre 1967 et 1984 sont donnés.

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Crowned Cranes *Balearica pavonina* near Fingoun, Niger (see p. 79).  
(Photo: R.A. Cheke).