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MIGRANTS AT MALAM'FATORI, LAKE CHAD, AUTUMN 1968.

R. J. Dowsett.

INTRODUCTION.

This has been the first autumn that full-time observations have been possible at Malam'fatori on the Nigerian shore of Lake Chad (13°37'N., 13°20'E.), although A. J. Hopson has managed to collect a lot of information on migrants in previous autumns. Unfortunately Tony Hopson was absent for all but the second half of October 1968, but R. H. Parker paid a most valuable visit from 18th to 22nd August.

By the time this account appears in print I will have left Lake Chad to return to Zambia, and at the moment there are no definite plans for anyone else to work full-time at Malam'fatori. I should again like to thank Mr. and Mrs. A.J. Hopson and Mr. and Mrs. R. B. Sharland for making my stay in Nigeria possible and profitable. Much help and encouragement has come from Mr. J. H. Elgood and Dr. J. F. Monk, and I must again thank the B.O.U. and the N.O.S. for financial assistance.

SYSTEMATIC LIST OF PALAEARCTIC MIGRANTS.

Most species that are of Ethiopian distribution as well as being potential migrants from the Palaearctic, such as Grey Heron Ardea cinerea, are not discussed here. Scientific names are given the first time species are mentioned, and these generally follow White (1960-65, Check List of African Birds, Lusaka, Zambia). Where the names used by Bannerman (1953, Birds of West and Equatorial Africa, 2 vols.) differ, these are placed in parentheses. Records cover the whole autumn period up to 31st October. The number of each species ringed during this period appears in brackets after its name. The abbreviation BNOS refers to Bull. Niger. Orn. Soc.

Glossy Ibis Plegadis falcinellus: small numbers summered on the Lake. The first in the Malam'fatori area appeared 21st August, and there were occasional parties of up to 34 throughout the rest of the autumn.

Garganey Anas querquedula: first (ca.50) 22nd August, thereafter flocks of up to 50 occasional.

Short-toed Eagle Circaetus gallicus: first 7th September, thereafter one or two daily to 12th October, often drifting southwards.

Peregrine Falcon Falco peregrinus: singles 21st August and 3rd and 6th September may perhaps have been Palaearctic migrants.

Kestrel Falco tinnunculus: one or two on three days 7th-21st October.

Osprey Pandion haliaetus: singles 22nd and 24th October.

Quail Coturnix coturnix: one 28th September the only autumn record.

Kentish Plover Charadrius (Leucopoliis) alexandrinus: first 17th August, thereafter one or two on several days to 2nd October.

Little Ringed Plover Charadrius dubius: (1); first 18th August, with up to 12 daily on passage and small numbers wintering from late October.

Ringed Plover Charadrius hiaticula: up to 6 daily 16th August to 25th September.

Greater Sandplover Charadrius leschenaultii: singles 2nd and 21st August, the first records for Nigeria and West Africa (BNOS, 1968, 5(19):61).

Grey Plover Pluvialis (Squatarola) squatarola: one non-breeding dress 26th September.

Sanderling Calidris (Crocethia) alba: (1); at least two different birds 17th-31st August (BNOS, 1968, 5(19):63-64).

Dunlin Calidris (Erolia) alpina: one in almost full breeding dress seen 6th September the 2nd record from Nigeria (BNOS, 1968, 5(20):94).

Curlew Sandpiper Calidris (Erolia testacea) ferruginea (2): up to 20 daily 17th August-12th September.

(Western Sandpiper Calidris mauri: a bird seen 30th August was thought to be this species, but as it did not call a definite identification could not be made.)

Little Stint Calidris (Erolia) minuta: (15); first 2nd August, thereafter over 100 some days. Last seen 2nd October (17).

Temminck's Stint Calidris (Erolia) temminckii: first 19th August (2), with up to 10 daily to 2nd October (1).

Great Snipe Gallinago (Capella) media: one 22nd September is the sole autumn record.

Broad-billed Sandpiper Limicola falcinellus: one seen 20th-21st August, the first for Nigeria and second for West Africa (BNOS, 1968, 5(19):61).

Black-tailed Godwit Limosa limosa: summered on the lake in small numbers, but not seen at Malam'fatori until 22nd August, from which date up to 50 on several days.

Curlew Numenius arquata: singles 1st, 14th and 27th September.

(Slender-billed Curlew Numenius tenuirostris: a party of nine curlews seen and heard in flight 23rd September might have been this Palearctic species which winters in N.W. Africa).

Whimbrel Numenius phaeopus: one collected 20th August (BNOS, 1968, 5(19):62-63). one present 7th-26th September was joined briefly by another on the 10th.

Ruff Philomachus pugnax: (6); summered in small numbers on the Lake, but not seen in Malam'fatori area until 16th August. Thereafter small numbers daily.

Spotted Redshank Tringa erythropus: 2 seen 6th September the only record this autumn.

Wood Sandpiper Tringa glareola: moderate numbers from 16th August, with a few probably wintering.

Common Sandpiper Tringa (Actitis) hypoleucos: (11); moderate numbers from 1st August with a few probably wintering.

Greenshank Tringa (Glottis) nebularia (2): first seen in the area 2nd August, and present daily thereafter. Peak numbers second half of August, in flocks of up to 28. A few doubtless winter.

Green Sandpiper Tringa ocropus; first 21st August, scarce thereafter.

Marsh Sandpiper Tringa (Glottis) stagnatilis (1): present daily from 16th August in parties of up to 8. Last noted 18th September.

Redshank Tringa totanus: singles on six dates 23rd August - 15th October.

Terek Sandpiper Xenus cinereus (1): at least four different birds 21st August - 2nd September (BNOS, 1968, 5(19):63), with one staying until 19th September. There are only two previous Nigerian and West African records.

Black-winged Pratincole Glareola nordmanni: one seen 9th and 11th September (BNOS, 1968, 5(20):95).

Whiskered Tern Chlidonias hybrida (leucopareia): a few summered on the Lake (BNOS, 1968, 5(19):62). One or two seen occasionally in the Malam'fatori area from 28th August.

White-winged Black Tern Chlidonias leucoptera: moderate numbers summered on the Lake, including the Malam'fatori area. Numbers built up in August, and during September flocks of 600 were common. Smaller numbers remained at the end of October.

Black Tern Chlidonias nigra: one in almost full breeding plumage seen 20th September (BNOS, 1968, 5(20):95).

Gull-billed Tern Gelochelidon nilotica: up to 5 on five dates 22nd August-15th October.

Caspian Tern Hydroprogne tschegrava (caspia): one 6th, two 12th and one 22nd September.

Lesser Black-backed Gull Larus fuscus: a few summered on the Lake, including the Malam'fatori area. Passage birds peaked at 45 on 16th August, last noted 12th September, but presumably a few winter.

Black-headed Gull Larus ridibundus: up to 4 adults in winter dress seen daily 8th-24th September.

Turtle Dove Streptopelia turtur: singles flew south 7th and 14th September.

Cuckoo Cuculus canorus: one seen 21st August, but not close enough to determine if it was the Palaearctic race (R.J.D., R.H.Parker).

Scops Owl Otus scops (senegalensis): one seen 29th August is early for a Palaearctic migrant, and it may have been the local race senegalensis.

European Swift Apus (Micropus) apus: small numbers flying south most days 18th August to 19th September.

Pallid Swift Apus (Micropus) pallidus: one flew south 14th September.

European Bee-eater Merops apiaster: two small groups flew south 29th September and 2nd October, the first records for the area.

European Roller Coracias garrulus: one 11th and two 28th September.

European Hoopoe Upupa o. epops: one 27th September and two 10th October were definitely the Palaearctic race.

Wryneck Jynx torquilla (6): at least 6 1st September to 25th October.

- Golden Oriole Oriolus oriolus (3): at least 13, most flying south, 13th September to 6th October.
- House Martin Delichon urbica: one 27 August, one 14th, two 15th and one 18th September were the first records for the area.
- European Swallow Hirundo rustica (1): first 29th August, thereafter up to 12 daily to the end of October (with 60++ on 16th October) and a few probably wintering.
- European Sand Martin Riparia riparia (1): first 29th August, thereafter daily, over 100 by 3rd and over 1,000 by 15th September. Winters.
- Tree Pipit Anthus trivialis: one seen on ground 23rd September and two 23rd October the first autumn records for the area.
- Yellow Wagtail Motacilla flava (6): first 3rd September, daily from 9th, with 100 by 15th September, numbers continually increasing. First birds were dark headed feldegg and cinereocapilla, nominate flava not arriving until early October. Winters.
- Woodchat Shrike Lanius senator (1): first 7th September, occasional thereafter.
- Nightingale Luscinia megarhynchos (14): at least 14 between 30th August and 4th October, peak 6th/10th September, but no song heard. A late bird heard 23rd October (A.J.Hopson).
- Black-cared Wheatear Oenanthe hispanica: one 3rd September.
- Wheatear Oenanthe oenanthe (1): one 3rd September, small numbers from 7th September numerous from mid-October. Winters.
- Redstart Phoenicurus phoenicurus (9): singles 31st August and 4th September. Present on several days 19th September to the end of October. Winters.
- (Marsh Warbler Acrocephalus palustris: a bird trapped on 7th September had the notch on the 2nd primary falling between primaries 7 and 8 on both wings - with the notch 10.0 and 10.5 mms. from the tip of the 2nd primary. Following Williamson (1960, Identification for Ringers, 1: Brit.Trust Orn.:26) and others it was accepted as palustris. However, Davis (1965, Brit.Bds. 58:188) has shown that birds with the notch in this position are indeterminate between palustris and scirpaceus. Similarly the one Nigerian record, a bird ringed at Kano in October (Elgood et al., 1966, Ibis 108:109), should be re-examined.)
- Reed Warbler Acrocephalus scirpaceus (28): four 18th-22nd August. One or two on 31st August to 11th October, peak 21st/25th September.
- Sedge Warbler Acrocephalus schoenobaenus (1): one 6th September, thereafter one or two on three days in September. Up to 6 daily in October, and a few probably wintering.
- Icterine Warbler Hippolias icterina (8): at least 10 different birds between 3rd September and 19th October.
- Olivaceous Warbler Hippolias pallida opaca (26): 24 birds of this race and 2 with the characters of the eastern elastica were trapped, and at least two others seen 31st August to 26th October. A few probably winter.
- Bonelli's Warbler Phylloscopus bonelli (1): singles 2nd and 27th October are the only records this autumn, although a few are known to winter (Hopson, pers.com.)
- Wood Warbler Phylloscopus sibilatrix (49): present daily in small numbers 27th August to 18th October, peaks 1st/5th and 21st/25th September. A late bird caught on 24th October.

Willow Warbler Phylloscopus trochilus (26): one 24th August, then a trickle 27th August to 8th October, small peak 16th/20th September.

Garden Warbler Sylvia borin (84): one 23rd August, moderate numbers almost daily 28th August to 19th October; Peak 11th/20th September. A late bird 23rd and 24th October.

Subalpine Warbler Sylvia cantillans (22): one 17th August, and 7 between 16th September and 2nd October. No more until 15th October, from which date present daily and several wintering.

Whitethroat Sylvia communis (91): small numbers almost daily from 27th August, with peaks 21st/25th September and 1st/5th October. A number handled seemed to be the eastern race icterops. Moderate numbers winter.

Lesser Whitethroat Sylvia curruca (28): at least 30 from 17th September, with moderate numbers wintering.

Barred Warbler Sylvia nisoria: one collected 17th October, the first record for Nigeria and West Africa (BNOS, 1968, 5(20):94).

Collared Flycatcher Ficedula albicollis (4): four caught 14th-24th September.

Pied Flycatcher Ficedula hypoleuca (13): at least 14 between 17th and 30th September.

Spotted Flycatcher Muscicapa striata (7): almost daily 5th September to 28th October, at least 13 different birds involved.

RINGING OF PALAEARCTIC MIGRANTS.

Although trapping effort in the study area during autumn was similar to that for much of spring, birds were much less numerous and only 470. Palearctic migrants of 32 species were ringed. The only bird retrapped from a previous season was a Subalpine Warbler from March 1968, although a Yellow Wagtail was seen that had probably been ringed in spring 1967 or earlier.

There have now been six recoveries of birds ringed at Malam'fatori:

Sand Martin	31.iii.67	rec. Malta (36°03'N., 14°17'E.)	11.v.68.
Sand Martin	21.iii.68	rec. Tunisia (35°50'N., 10°12'E.)	10.v.68.
Blue-headed Wagtail	18.iv.68	rec. Malta (35°53'N., 14°32'E.)	7.ix.68.
Sedge Warbler	21.iv.68	rec. U.S.S.R. (58°37'N., 43°51'E.)	4.vi.68.
Whitethroat	13.iv.67	rec. Egypt (30°50'N., 29°35'E.)	23.ix.68.
Pied Flycatcher	9. x.66	rec. Cyprus (35°01'N., 33°59'E.)	?

This last bird was ringed by Tony Hopson, the others by the B.O.U. Expeditions and/or myself.

ETHIOPIAN MIGRANTS, AUTUMN 1968.

Cattle Egret Ardeola (Bubulcus) ibis: numbers increased locally in August, with a flock of 500 in early September.

Hamerkop Scopus umbretta: A late bird seen 27th October (R.J.D., A.J.Hopson).

Abdim's Stork Ciconia (Sphenorhynchus) abdimii: all left by the first week of October, with a late bird on the 30th October.

Lanner Falco biarmicus: common south of Malam'fatori from June, with singles in the area 7th September and 10th October.

White-fronted Sandplover Charadrius (Leucopoliis) marginatus (21): 130-150 during August, all left mid-September (last 12th) as sand banks were covered by the rising lake level.

Kittlitz's Sandplover Charadrius (Leucopoliis) pecuarius (37): 90-100 in August, declined to 27 on 7th September, and the last left the shore on 13th September.

Grey Pratincole Glareola (Galachrysis) cinerea (44): numbers built up to 519 in early September, but from mid-September they became very flighty and started leaving. Last noted (ca.50) 2nd October.

Egyptian Plover Pluvianus aegyptius (11): 100 throughout August had declined to 6 by 7th September, and the last (2) were noted on the 18th.

Little Tern Sterna albifrons guinea: for several days from 6th September a pair fed two juveniles, flying weakly, on the shore. A third adult was sometimes present.

Skimmer Rhynchops flavirosrris (4): large numbers in August, fewer in September, and last noted (2) on 22nd.

Senegal Kingfisher Halcyon senegalensis: late birds seen 27th and 31st October (R.J.D., A.J.H.).

Pygmy Kingfisher Ispidina picta (3): small numbers from July, last on 13th September.

White-fronted Bee-eater Merops (Aerops) albicollis (66): the last flighty group left on 9th October, with stragglers on 14th (3) and 16th (2).

Blue-checked Bee-eater Merops superciliosus chrysocercus (29): the first arrivals flew over 2nd and 3rd October, but they did not stay in the area for another fortnight.

Paradise Flycatcher Terpsiphone (Tchitrea) viridis: one seen on 6th October.

Pygmy Long-tailed Sunbird Anthreptes (Hedypina) platyura (33): the odd one present throughout; but numbers increased noticeably locally from late September into October.

Beautiful Long-tailed Sunbird Nectarinia pulchella (412): moderate numbers present throughout, but from mid-September a great increase as many parties of juveniles on the wing appeared.

Cut-throat Finch Amadina fasciata (14): a very sparse resident in the area, but numbers greatly increased locally during October, mostly pairs of males and females.

Rock Bunting Fringillaris tahapisi (28): strong passage through the area in September, last seen (2) on 6th October.

Melba Finch Pytilia melba (27): a sparse resident in the area, but numbers much increased locally from mid-September, mostly in pairs.

Golden Sparrow Passer (Auripasser) luteus (677): the very large numbers of March to May much reduced thereafter, with only the odd small group noted.

Scaly-fronted Weaver Sporopipes frontalis (4); present in small numbers from August, last noted 2nd October.

RINGING OF ETHIOPIAN SPECIES.

During the autumn period 2,127 birds of 62 Ethiopian species were ringed. There have been no recoveries. The total number of birds of all species (Palae-arctic and Ethiopian) ringed from March to October was 11,305 of 126 species.

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PALAEARCTIC MIGRANTS IN WEST LAGOS:

NOVEMBER 1968 to MAY 1969.

D. I. M. Wallace.

INTRODUCTION

I arrived in Nigeria on 29th October 1968 and within a week commenced regular observations on the birds in the Apapa and the Iganmu/Ijora areas of Lagos and in the area known as Tarkwa Bay west of the lagoon mouth. Since my knowledge of Ethiopian birds stems from the eastern side of the continent, I need to be more certain of diagnosis in certain indigenous groups before attempting any general paper and therefore the following notes refer only to Palae-arctic migrants.

HABITAT DESCRIPTIONS

- A. Apapa - a small area of house gardens (Badagry Road), ca.200 yards of creek and, overlooked, a large expanse of mangrove and other creek vegetation. Almost daily records.
- I. Iganmu/Ijora -terminal lagoon (slacks) and relict swamps interspersed by roads and buildings, only partially sampled due to difficulty of passage. Several records weekly.
- T. Tarkwa Bay -bathing beach, its breakwaters, open shore to the west (1½ miles), open bushy/grassy dunes immediately inland, Palmgroves and other semicultivation inland of last to mangrove surround of creeks. 38 visits in the seven months.

LIST OF SPECIES

Honey Buzzard Pernis apivorus: A, 14th December, T, 3 moving east then north,