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Société d'Ornithologie de l'Ouest
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to the free flow of traffic, an added variety was provided by verdant rivers, with picnic enclosures - ah, a leg-stretch at last - on their banks.

The management of this reserve, for animals, the landscape, and visitors alike, is admirable.

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CUCKOO CALLS

R.E. Sharland.

On comparing the descriptions of the calls of African cuckoos I find that there are several discrepancies between the various authorities. It is difficult to tell whether these are different interpretations or whether cuckoos do have different calls at different seasons and in different places.

African Cuckoo Cuculus canorus: This birds call is simple and does not seem to vary. Williams (1963) description "Koo-Kuk" fits the bird very well.

Red-chested Cuckoo Cuculus solitarius: Bannerman (1933) has two descriptions of the call. The first (Chapin's) "-three notes uttered in a descending scale quickly repeated - is the only call I have heard in Nigeria." This call can often be heard at night in Jos and apparently also in southern Nigeria as mentioned by Button (1967). Bannerman also quotes Friedmann's description of another call in South Africa which is similar but with a breath in between each note.

Button also identified three other notes - (i) An oscillating "Hwoot-Hwoot, Hweet," from 12 to 20 notes rising in pitch and intensity to a crescendo and declining gradually followed by the sequence "hwitchew, hwitchow, hwitchow". This call must be very similar to the call I have heard from Black Cuckoos in Kano but without the sequence "hwitchew" at the end. (iii) loud single note "Kweer". (iv) a deep mellow trilling.

Black Cuckoo Cuculus clamosus Here there is some disagreement.

Williams	Kenya	Three notes descending.
Roberts (1940)	S.Africa	Two notes.
Bannerman	W.Africa	Two or three notes.
Button	Nigeria	Three or four notes rising.

Black Cuckoos are fairly common around Kano from May to August. In my experience the call consists of three notes but the second is softer and at times is hard to hear. The third note is slightly drawn out and is always a tone higher than the first note.

This July and August (1969) I heard both male and female Black Cuckoos making another call - a harsh bubbling "hwoot - hwoot" rising and descending, lasting for about 5 seconds.

Great Spotted Cuckoo Cuculus glandarius: Descriptions of this bird's call are rather indeterminate. Witherby et al (1941) says that the spring call is a very rasping "Kicou, Kicou" and a very short harsh "cark cark". I have heard both these calls in Kano in May.

Pied Cuckoo Clamator jacobinus: Williams describes the cry as a loud piping call often followed by a two or three-note cackling call "quer-qui-quick".

In Kano the piping call is two notes running into each other and the cackling nearly always follows and consists of ten or twelve cackles.

Levaillants Cuckoo Clamator levaillantii: Williams says that the call in Kenya is a rapid "cur, cur, cur, cur, cur" changing abruptly to a high-pitched "qui, qui, qui, qui". Bannerman says that the bird is comparatively silent and the call is a "rather querulous "crik-et"; Friedmann has heard it utter a peculiar "cow" or "eough", a note somewhat woodpecker-like on quality but less nasal; it also has a call similar to that of a Pied Cuckoo - a semi-whistled note rapidly repeated.

In my experience this cuckoo calls frequently in Kano from May to November. the call is very similar to that of the Pied Cuckoo but much harsher both in the introductory call and the cackle which it changes to. At the end of the season the introductory call is repeated sometimes and is not always followed by a cackle.

Olive-backed Long-tailed Cuckoo Cercococcyx clininus: Buttons description is the only one - (i) a prolonged wavering whistle oscillating back and forth through a semitone, steadily climbing in pitch and increasing in intensity; lasting up to a minute, it ends abruptly; the call has a "hysterical" quality. (ii) a crisp call of three descending notes - rather like that of C. solitarius in reverse. This increases the confusion over C. solitarius which definitely has a descending call in Northern Nigeria.

Von Mechow's Cuckoo Cercococcyx mechowi: Button suspects its presence in Nigeria and quotes Bannerman's description - "a descending sequence of silvery notes delivered hurriedly and with irregular tempo lasting 3-4 seconds."

Emerald Cuckoo Chrysococcyx cupreus: There seems to be general agreement that the call is a musical triple "Hello Georgie" In my experience of the call in southern and northern Nigeria there is always a brief pause after the first note and the third note is three tones higher.

Didric Cuckoo Chrysococcyx caprius: All the authorities agree on the onomatopoeic call of the Didric Cuckoo - "dee, dee, diric" sometimes extending to four notes.

Klass Cuckoo Chrysococcyx klaasii: My impression of Klaas' Cuckoo's call is three notes of equal length running into each other with the second note two tones higher than the other two.

It may well be that many African cuckoos change their calls in course of the season or after breeding as does the European Cuckoo Cuculus canorus.

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