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previous records of this species from the Ivory Coast, although it is frequent in central Burkina Faso (Thonnerieux *et al.* 1989) and rarely recorded in Ghana (Grimes 1987). *Sylvia hortensis* Orphean Warbler. A single male seen briefly in rear view, when it flew into a tree in woodland bordering the Comoé River, about 10 km south of Kofolo. Its large size, compared to several *H. polyglotta* in the area, was apparent. The mantle appeared ash-grey, becoming dark slate (almost black) on the back and top of the head. I was unable to note further detail before the bird moved upwards out of sight. Seconds later it appeared briefly in the canopy. I was only able to see the head, which in shape appeared like that of Whitethroat *S. communis*, but larger, with a steep forehead, peaked crown and slim bill. Its hood was slate coloured, with white throat and pale creamy iris. Unfortunately I only had it in view for about 2 s before it disappeared and could not be relocated. I tentatively identified the bird as an Orphean Warbler, a bird with which I am familiar. There are no previous records of this species from Ivory Coast, nor from Ghana (Grimes 1987).

It seems likely that the above species have been under-recorded in the Ivory Coast. Comoé remains a very under-watched area and any programme of mist netting there would probably be very productive.

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#### Discovery of a nest of Puvel's Akalat *Illadopsis puveli*

Puvel's Akalat *Illadopsis puveli* ranges in W Africa from Senegal to NE Zaire (Mackworth-Praed & Grant 1973). In Ivory Coast it is one of the most widespread members of the family Timaliidae (Thiollay 1985) and is common in gallery forests in the Comoé National Park in the north-east of the country (pers. obs.). Almost nothing is known about the behaviour of the species, and its nest has never been described (Bannerman 1953, Mackworth-Praed & Grant 1973, G.S. Keith pers.

comm.). In this article, a nest of the species is described and additional notes on its behaviour presented.

The nest (Fig. 1) was found on 15 November 1995 in the gallery forest of the Comoé river in Comoé National Park, at about 8°45'N, 3°49'W. It was positively identified because an adult bird was flushed off the nest. The bird had brown upperparts contrasting with the whitish underparts, and an indistinct buff breast-band (Allport *et al.* 1996). Its call was heard later and identified as that of this species (Chappuis 1975). When discovered, the nest contained two young birds with closed eyes and no feathers, weighing respectively 5.0 and 5.1 g. On 18 Nov their weights were 14.0 and 14.1, and the remiges were pins. On 21 Nov the weights were 26.5 and 27.3, and the eyes were open. On 24 Nov the nest was empty.



**Figure 1.** Nest of Puvel's Akalat, 18 Nov 1995, Comoé National Park.

The nest was situated on the ground, partly under a fallen branch, in an open place in otherwise dense forest. It was a bowl of outer diameter 17 cm, inner diameter 8 cm and internal depth 2.5 cm. It was in a hollow scratched in the ground, which was lined with twigs up to 5 mm in diameter, partly coated with mud. The nest structure was of dry leaves, pieces of bark and some grass. The whole construction was very loose and fell apart when it was collected.

When the adult bird was flushed off the nest it ran away in a quail-like manner (Bates in Mackworth-Praed & Grant 1973). This kind of movement was never observed when the birds searched for food on the ground. Foraging, which was frequently observed between November and March in dense undergrowth of the gallery forest, occurred exclusively on the ground and often in small flocks of three to six birds. The birds hopped and searched for food among dry leaves usually by jumping towards a leaf, turning it with the bill and jumping backwards to investigate what was under it.

Owing to their secretive nature, the behaviour of the members of the genus *Illadopsis* in W Africa is not well known. For most of the species occurring in the area, the nests are undescribed (Mackworth-Praed & Grant 1973). However, where they are known (e.g. Rufous-winged and Black-cap Akalats *I. fulvescens* and *I. cleaveri*) they seem to be similar to the one described here, and the usual number of eggs seems to be two (Mackworth-Praed & Grant 1973).

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#### Red-crested Bustard *Eupodotis ruficrista* and Adamawa Turtle Dove *Streptopelia hypopyrrha*, new to The Gambia, and sightings of Great Snipe *Gallinago media*

During recent visits to The Gambia, two species were seen that do not figure in recent checklists, while a third was previously known from only one record (Gore 1990, Morel & Morel 1990, Dowsett 1993).