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### **New records of Moussier's Redstart *Phoenicurus moussieri* and Lesser Striped Swallow *Hirundo abyssinica* from Mauritania**

During an expedition of the Swiss Ornithological Institute to Mauritania in September 2001, two bird species were observed, neither of which is mentioned in literature for the country (Lamarche 1988, Keith *et al.* 1992, Dowsett & Dowsett-Lemaire 1993, Borrow & Demeey 2001) although they have been recorded in Mauritania (B. Lamarche *in litt.*).

***Phoenicurus moussieri* Moussier's Redstart.** At our camp at 18°33'N, 10°22'W between Tidjikja and Tichit on 12 September, VS and FL saw a bird fly into a bush, emerge after a short time to stay a few seconds on the ground, then fly off not to be seen again. Although the observation, from c. 15 m, was brief, the red tail indicated that it was a Redstart *Phoenicurus* sp. The deep red underparts excluded Black Redstart *P. ochruros* and female Common Redstart *P. phoenicurus*. The bird differed from male Common Redstart by the more intense colour of the underparts and the red rather than black throat. It had a distinctive whitish supercilium, extending from the forehead backwards and curving around the ear coverts. The supercilium was slightly mottled with black, and the crown was dark with brown feather fringes, indicating a male Moussier's Redstart in eclipse plumage (Svensson *et al.* 1999).

According to Keith *et al.* (1992) Moussier's Redstart is endemic to NW Africa (Morocco, Algeria, Tunisia, Libya) with vagrants recorded in Malta, Italy and Britain. It might be a short distance migrant but its movements are not well known (Keith *et al.* 1992). Our observation is apparently the first south of the Sahara to be published, although the species has been observed in the country by B. Lamarche (*in litt.*).

***Hirundo abyssinica* Lesser Striped Swallow.** On the afternoon of 22 September in the Guelta Metraugha, a narrow valley fringed by cliffs, at about 16°37'42"N, 11°24'12" between Kiffa and Ayoun, we (VS, RA, FL, DP) observed a flock of c. 20 Lesser Striped Swallows together with some Barn Swallows *H. rustica* and African Rock Martins *H. fuligula*. The Lesser Striped Swallows were distinguished from Barn Swallows by the red head and rump. Some of them flew less than 10 m overhead in

good light, revealing their distinctly striped underparts and white undertail coverts, which distinguish them from Red-rumped Swallow *H. daurica*.

Lesser Striped Swallows are migratory visitors north of 10°N, where they breed in the rains (Keith *et al.* 1992). The present record, together with B. Lamarche's (*in litt.*) unpublished observations, is the northernmost sighting of this species. The number seen suggests that it may not be merely a vagrant.

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### First breeding record of Ovambo Sparrowhawk *Accipiter ovampensis* in West Africa

Ovambo Sparrowhawk *Accipiter ovampensis* is a scarce though fairly widespread endemic to woodlands in sub-Saharan Africa (Brown *et al.* 1982). Its movements and breeding patterns are poorly known, and the only breeding records come from southern Africa, where it regularly breeds from September to November (Maclean 1993), and Kenya, where there are single records from May and September (Ferguson-Lees & Christie 2001). It is thought not to breed north of 1°N, and only regularly breeds south of 6°S (Ferguson-Lees & Christie 2001), although juveniles have been recorded in Senegal (Brown *et al.* 1982).