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Zebra Waxbill *Amandava subflava*, new for Mauritania

The Zebra Waxbill *Amandava subflava* is a locally common to scarce resident in West Africa (Borrow & DemeY 2001). It is uncommon and local in Mali north to 15°N (Lamarche 1981), and frequent in Djoudj National Park, Senegal, where it breeds (Rodwell *et al.* 1996). There are no published records from Mauritania so far (Gee 1984, Lamarche 1988, Dowsett & Dowsett-Lemaire 1993, Messaoud *et al.* 1998).

Zebra Waxbills were observed in Diawling National Park, Mauritania (16°18'12''N, 16°23'56''W), during two visits in 2003. On 18 May a flock of 5–7 was observed foraging in short grass near the park headquarters, c. 11 km north of the Dama dam on the Senegal river, the border with Senegal. Several flocks of similar size were observed on 25–26 Oct, < 1 km from the first site. They were small, active estrildids with olive-brownish mantle and barring on sides of belly, yellow-orange breast and belly, and red bill and supercilium in males. The red rump and short brown tail distinguished them from Black-rumped Waxbill *Estrilda troglodytes*, which might also occur in the area. The field identification was confirmed by J. Korb, I. Maggini, and A. Mauley.

These are apparently the first records of the species for Mauritania, despite records in nearby Djoudj NP (Rodwell *et al.* 1996), northeast of ours. These observations suggest that Zebra Waxbills belong to the regular avifauna of the western Senegal River valley.

These observations stem from the Swiss Ornithological Institute project on Bird Migration across the Sahara.

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