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The birds of Mbam and Djerem National Park, Cameroon

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Summary

In the first inventory of the avifauna of the recently established Mbam and Djerem National Park in central Cameroon, based on fieldwork carried out in March 2000, a list of 362 confirmed species was compiled. A number of species rare in Cameroon are documented and many records extend the known range of species to the north or south. These preliminary surveys show that Mbam and Djerem NP is the richest protected area in bird species in Cameroon.

Résumé

Les oiseaux du Parc National du Mbam et Djerem, Cameroun. Sur la base du premier inventaire des oiseaux effectué en mars 2000 dans le nouveau Parc National du Mbam et Djerem au centre du Cameroun, une liste de 362 espèces confirmées est donnée. Certaines espèces rares du Cameroun y sont aussi décrites et la distribution connue de beaucoup d'espèces s'est étendue vers le nord ou le sud. Ces premiers inventaires montrent que le PN du Mbam et Djerem est l'aire protégée la plus riche en espèces d'oiseaux de tout le Cameroun.

Introduction

The Mbam and Djerem National Park was gazetted in January 2000 and consists of 416,512 ha in central Cameroon, 50 km south of Tibati and 20 km northeast of Yoko. It lies between 5°30' and 6°14'N, and 12°20' and 13°15'E. The climate has two seasons of almost equal length: the rainy season from mid-April to mid-October and

the dry season from mid-October to mid-April. The annual rainfall is *c.* 1900 mm and the average annual temperature is 24°C. The vegetation is sudano-guinean, between the guinean dense forest of S Cameroon and the wooded savanna of the Adamaoua plateau. The habitat is primarily forest-savanna mosaic with an area of primary lowland rainforest in the south of the park. In the wooded savanna, the following trees dominate: *Annona senegalensis*, *Lophira lanceolata*, *Vitellaria paradoxa*, *Daniella oliveri*, *Azadirachta indica* and *Anogeissus leiocarpus*, with *Borassus aethiopicum* near the Djerem river. *Hyparrhenia rufa*, *Imperata cylindrica* and *Pennisetum purpureum* dominate the herb layer. In forest areas there are more semi-deciduous plants like *Irvingia gabonensis*, *Enantia clauranta*, *Lophira alata* and *Triplochiton scleroxylon*. More details of the vegetation may be found in Maisels *et al.* (2000) and Maisels (2004). The relief is almost flat, but there is an altitudinal drop from 930 m to 650 m from the north to the south of the park. The park is bisected by a tributary of the Sanaga River known as the Djerem River, which passes through the Mbakaou reservoir 11 km north of the park (Fig. 1).

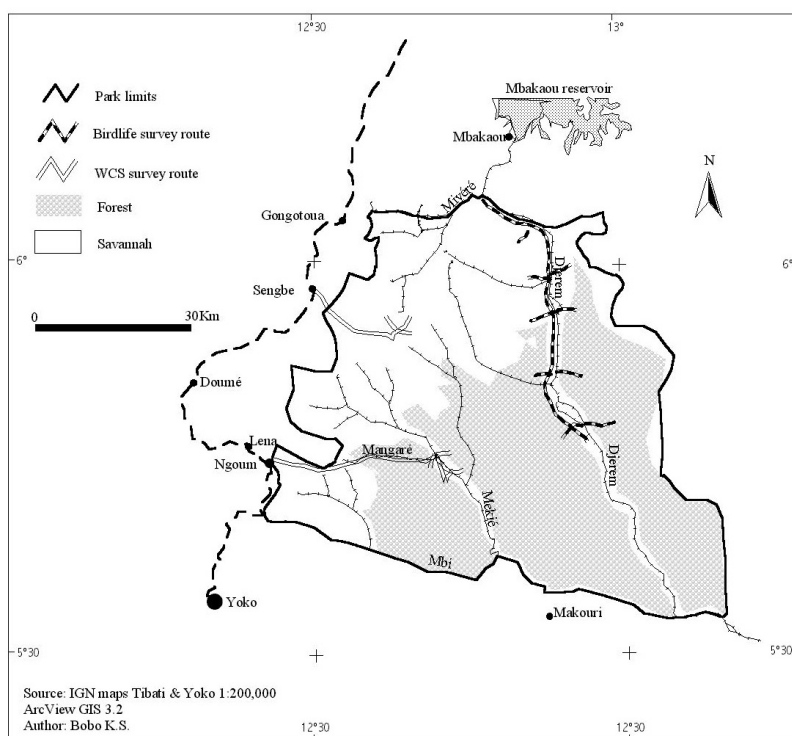


Figure 1. The study area.

Methods

Two teams surveyed the park in March 2000. The first team, composed of KSB, EW and DNA; carried out a survey 9–21 March as part of the Important Bird Areas (IBA) programme of Birdlife International, implemented by the former Cameroon Ornithological Club (COC), now known as the Cameroon Biodiversity Conservation Society (CBCS). This team entered the park from Mbakaou village at Miyéré waterfalls (6°12'N, 12°45'E), and followed the Djerem River south across forest-savanna mosaic and eventually into the lowland rainforest area towards the south of the park. A number of eastward and westward transects were made to cover areas distant from the river. The second team consisted of RF and MFN. This team surveyed two areas: the southwest and the northwest of the Park, for 12 and seven days respectively, in March 2000. Both surveys started at the western border of the park, respectively at 5°46'N (Ngum village) and 5°57'N (Sengbe village) going eastwards and southeastwards to about the centre of the Park (Maisels *et al.* 2000), and used a combination of observations whilst walking, song identification, and early morning mist-netting.

All bird species recorded by sight and sound were logged daily. We used the colour plates from Borrow & Demey (2001), kindly made available by the authors before publication. Many species were tape-recorded, especially those unsupported by visual identification, and tapes were later compared with Chappuis (2000). A few species were also filmed. Mist-netting was done by the WCS team, generally between 6h00 and 9h00.

Assessment of abundance follows Morel & Tye (1995): A = Abundant (11–100 may be seen or heard in suitable habitat per day; C = Common (1–10 may be seen or heard in suitable habitat per day); F = Frequent (often seen or heard but not every day); U = Uncommon (one or few records only). Habitats are: R = Riverine (Djerem River); LF = Lowland rainforest; GF = Gallery forest; F-S = Forest-savanna mosaic; S = Savanna; WS = Wooded savanna. Sequence and nomenclature follow Brown *et al.* (1982), Urban *et al.* (1986), Fry *et al.* (1988, 2000), Keith *et al.* (1992), Urban *et al.* (1997) and Fry & Keith (2004).

Results

Phalacrocoracidae

Phalacrocorax africanus Long-tailed Cormorant. C; R.

Ardeidae

Nycticorax nycticorax Black-crowned Night Heron. F; R.

Ardeola ralloides Squacco Heron. F; R within F-S.

Bubulcus ibis Cattle Egret. C; usually in association with small herds of domestic cattle in the north.

Egretta intermedia Intermediate Egret. F; R.

Ardea purpurea Purple Heron. One, Djerem River, 11 Mar.

A. melanocephala Black-headed Heron. F; R.

Scopidae

Scopus umbretta Hamerkop. C; R.

Ciconiidae

Anastomus lamelligerus African Openbill Stork. One, Djerem River, 12 Mar.

Ciconia abdimii Abdim's Stork. A; flocks of up to 200 recorded.

C. episcopus Woolly-necked Stork. U; R and WS.

Leptoptilos crumeniferus Marabou Stork. F; R and WS.

Threskiornithidae

Bostrychia hagadash Hadada. C; R.

Bostrychia rara Spot-breasted Ibis. F; R and GF.

Anatidae

Plectropterus gambensis Spur-winged Goose. One, Djerem River, 10 Mar.

Pteronetta hartlaubii Hartlaub's Duck. One in small pool within gallery forest, 11 Mar.

Accipitridae

Pandion haliaetus Osprey. One at the northern boundary of the park near Mbakaou, 20 Mar.

Macheiramphus alcinus Bat Hawk. One over the Djerem River, 13 Mar.

Milvus migrans Black Kite. A; throughout. Mainly *M. m. parasitus*.

Haliaeetus vocifer African Fish Eagle. F; R.

Gypohierax angolensis Palmnut Vulture. C; throughout.

Necrosyrtes monachus Hooded Vulture. U; WS and S.

Gyps africanus African White-backed Vulture. One adult at southern edge of the savanna mosaic at 5°57'N, 12°52'E, 14 Mar.

Circaetus cinereus Brown Snake Eagle. F; throughout.

Terathopius ecaudatus Bateleur. One adult over savanna, 12 Mar.

Polyboroides typus Harrier Hawk. F; throughout.

Circus aeruginosus European Marsh Harrier. F; mainly R.

Micronisus gabar Gabar Goshawk. U; S.

Accipiter tachiro African Goshawk. U; forest edge.

A. castanilius Chestnut-flanked Sparrowhawk. U; R and forest edge.

A. badius Shikra. U; S.

A. ovampensis Ovambo Sparrowhawk. An adult of the grey morph in flight over wooded savanna, 13 Mar, at 6°3'N, 12°50'E. This is outside the Jun–Dec period of most of the records to date for W Africa (*e.g.* Thiolley 1985, Barlow *et al.* 1997). The species possibly breeds in W Africa and may be more widespread than records suggest (Salewski 1998).

Urotriorchis macrourus Long-tailed Hawk. U; LF.

Butastur rufipennis Grasshopper Buzzard. One, WS, 11 Mar.

Kaupifalco monnogramicus Lizard Buzzard. U; LF.

Buteo buteo Common Buzzard. One in flight over wooded savanna at 6°7'N, 12°50'E, 10 Mar. Louette (1981) rejects one 1961 record. Since then there have been three more: Mt Oku, Oct–Nov 1988 (Holyoak & Seddon 1990), Feb 1998 (F. Dowsett-Lemaire & R.J. Dowsett pers comm.); Yoko, Mar 99 (H. Slabbekoorn pers. comm.).

B. auguralis Red-necked Buzzard. C; mainly F-S.

Aquila wahlbergi Wahlberg's Eagle. Three sightings of adults over savanna, two dark phase and one pale phase individual.

Hieraaetus ayresii Ayres's Hawk Eagle. An adult over gallery forest at 6°12'N, 12°45'E, 9 Mar. Reported with increasing frequency in Cameroon, where it was unrecorded until recently (Clark 1999).

Lophaelus occipitalis Long-crested Eagle. One over gallery forest in the north of the park, 9 Mar.

Stephanoaetus coronatus Crowned Eagle. U; GF. Well known to local hunters and constantly imitated by *Cossypha* spp.

Falconidae

Falco alopex Fox Kestrel. One, WS in central area of the park over the Djerem River. Unusual habitat for this species which is usually associated with rock outcrops.

F. chicquera Red-necked Falcon. U; WS and S.

F. cuvierii African Hobby. U; F-S.

Phasianidae

Francolinus lathamii Latham's Forest Francolin. U; LF.

F. squamatus Scaly Francolin. F; LF.

F. bicarcaratus Double-spurred Francolin. F; F-S.

Guttera pucherani Crested Guineafowl. U; LF.

Numida meleagris Helmeted Guineafowl. C; in the north.

Coturnix chinensis Blue Quail. One seen along the Ngoum–Yoko road in the south.

Rallidae

Sarothrura pulchra White-spotted Flufftail. F; GF.

Heliornithidae

Podica senegalensis African Finfoot. U; R.

Burhinidae

Burhinus senegalensis Senegal Thick-knee. F; R.

Glareola nuchalis Rock Pratincole. A; R.

Charadriidae

Pluvialis squatarola Grey Plover. One seen on sandbank along the Mékié River (5°46'N, 12°41'E) late in the afternoon.

Vanellus senegallus African Wattled Lapwing. F; R.

V. albiceps White-headed Lapwing. C; on the river.

V. superciliosus Brown-chested Lapwing. F; R. A pair defending a breeding territory against European Marsh Harriers, in grassy savanna alongside the Djerem River.

Scolopacidae

Tringa ochropus Green Sandpiper. U; R.

Actitis hypoleucos Common Sandpiper. C; R.

Columbidae

Treron waalia Bruce's Green Pigeon. F; forest edge.

T. calva African Green Pigeon. A; mainly GF and LF; occasionally WS.

Turtur brehmeri Blue-headed Wood Dove. U; LF.

T. tympanistria Tambourine Dove. U; GF and LF.

T. afer Blue-spotted Wood Dove. A; WS. F; LF.

Columba unicincta Afep Pigeon. F; F-S. Five at 6°3'N, 12°50'E, 12 Mar, constitute the northernmost records in Cameroon together with those at Takamanda (Languy & Njie 2003) and Ako (pers. obs.).

Streptopelia semitorquata Red-eyed Dove. A; throughout.

S. vinacea Vinaceous Dove. A; S.

Psittacidae

Psittacus erithacus Grey Parrot. F; LF.

Poicephalus gulielmi Red-fronted Parrot. U; LF.

Agapornis pullarius Red-headed Lovebird. F; WS.

Musophagidae

Corythaeola cristata Great Blue Turaco. C; LF and adjacent GF. Not in GF in the north.

Tauraco persa Green Turaco. F; GF.

T. leucolophus White-crested Turaco. U; heard in evenings north of the park, in a gallery forest at 5°59'N, 12°39'E.

Cuculidae

Oxylophus levaillantii Levaillant's Cuckoo. One seen near Mékié River crossing a burnt savanna.

Cuculus solitarius Red-chested Cuckoo. U; F-S.

C. clamosus Black Cuckoo C; throughout.

C. canorus European Cuckoo. One, F-S.

C. gularis African cuckoo. U; F-S.

Cercococcyx mechowi Dusky Long-tailed Cuckoo. F; LF and adjacent GF. Not in the north.

C. olivinus Olive Long-tailed Cuckoo. U; LF. Heard and netted.

Chrysococcyx cupreus Emerald Cuckoo. F; mainly LF; rarer in GF.

C. flavigularis Yellow-throated Cuckoo. F; GF north to 6°3'N, 12°50'E. Apparently absent from LF.

C. klaas Klaas's Cuckoo. C; throughout.

Ceuthmochares aereus Yellowbill. C; GF and LF.

Centropus senegalensis Senegal Coucal. F; S.

C. monachus Blue-headed Coucal. F; GF.

Strigidae

Otus senegalensis African Scops Owl. One heard at Mangare 2 (5°47'N, 12°36'E) and another along the Ngoum–Yoko road.

Bubo africanus Spotted Eagle Owl. Heard once at night in GF in the north of the park (5°57'N, 12°36'E).

Glaucidium tephronotum Red-chested Owlet. One heard at night in GF in the north of the park (5°57'N, 12°36'E).

Strix woodfordii African Wood Owl. F; GF and LF.

[*Scotopelia bouvieri* Vermiculated Fishing Owl. Although we did not record this species, local fishermen recognised the call from tape. They stated that birds stopped calling with the onset of the rains, which could account for our lack of records.]

Caprimulgidae

Caprimulgus climacurus Long-tailed Nightjar. F; S.

C. nigriscapularis Black-shouldered Nightjar. One singing in S in the north of the park, 19 Mar.

C. inornatus Plain Nightjar. A female, WS, 12 Mar.

C. tristigma Freckled Nightjar. One heard and one seen along the Ngoum-Yoko road, 21 Mar.

C. europaeus European Nightjar. One heard, in S in the north of the park., 19 Mar.

Macrodipteryx longipennis Standard-winged Nightjar. A male, WS, 19 Mar.

M. vexillarius Pennant-winged Nightjar. F; in shrubs along the Ngoum-Yoko road and along the Mékié River.

Apodidae

Rhaphidura sabini Sabine's Spinetail. F; LF and GF north to 6°8'N, 12°50'E.

Telocanthura ussheri Mottled Spinetail. U; flying over the Mékié River.

Neafrapus cassini Cassins Spinetail. F; LF and GF.

Cypsiurus parvus African Palm Swift. A; F-S.

Apus apus European Swift. C; in the north.

A. affinis Little Swift. C; in the north.

Tachymarptis melba Alpine swift. One sighting of two individuals at Mangaré 1 (5°46'N, 12°33'E) in the south.

Coliidae

Colius striatus Speckled Mousebird. C; mainly GF.

Trogonidae

Apaloderma narina Narina Trogon. F; GF.

A. aequatoriale Bare-cheeked Trogon. One in the forest 500 m from Mékié River.

Alcedinidae

Halcyon badia Chocolate-backed Kingfisher. C; GF and LF.

H. leucocephala Grey-headed Kingfisher. A; WS. Several breeding sites found.

H. malimbica Blue-breasted Kingfisher. C; GF and LF.

H. chelicuti Striped Kingfisher. C; WS.

Ceyx lecontei African Dwarf Kingfisher. Two netted in GF in the north.

C. picta African Pygmy Kingfisher. F; GF.

Alcedo leucogaster White-bellied Kingfisher. U; GF. One netted in GF in the north.

A. cristata Malachite Kingfisher. C; R.

A. quadribachys Shining-blue Kingfisher. F; R.

Megaceryle maxima Giant Kingfisher. F; R.

Ceryle rudis Pied Kingfisher. U; R.

Meropidae

Merops gularis Black Bee-eater. F; GF. One found excavating a nest hole in a mud furrow within a gallery strip.

M. pusillus Little Bee-eater. A; S.

M. variegatus Blue-breasted Bee-eater. F; S.

M. albicollis White-throated Bee-eater. A; GF and LF.

Coraciidae

Eurystomus gularis Blue-throated Roller. U; LF.

E. glaucurus Broad-billed Roller. C; mainly WS.

Phoeniculidae

Phoeniculus purpureus Green Woodhoopoe. U; WS.

P. aterrimus Black Woodhoopoe. U; WS.

Upupidae

Upupa epops Hoopoe. F; WS.

Bucerotidae

Tockus albocristatus White-crested Hornbill. F; LF.

T. hartlaubi Black Dwarf Hornbill. One, LF at 5°52'N, 12°53'E, 17 Mar.

T. camurus Red-billed Dwarf Hornbill. C; GF.

T. fasciatus African Pied Hornbill. C; GF and LF.

Ceratogymna fistulator Piping Hornbill. C; GF and LF.

C. subcylindricus Black-and-white-casqued Hornbill. A; GF and LF.

C. albotibialis White-thighed Hornbill. C; LF, occasionally GF.

C. atrata Black-casqued Wattled Hornbill. C; LF and GF.

Capitonidae

Gymnobucco bonapartei Grey-throated Barbet. Two seen once at LF in the south.

G. peli Bristle-nosed Barbet. A group of 10 in LF at 5°52'N, 12°53'E, 17 Mar.

Pogoniulus scolopaceus Speckled Tinkerbird. C; LF and GF.

P. atroflavus Red-rumped Tinkerbird. F; LF and GF.

P. subsulphureus Yellow-throated Tinkerbird. C; LF and GF to 6°N, 12°52'E.

P. bilineatus Yellow-rumped Tinkerbird. A; LF; GF and WS.

Buccanodon duchaillui Yellow-spotted Barbet. C; LF and GF.

Tricholaema hirsuta Hairy-breasted Barbet. F; LF.

Lybius vieilloti Vieillot's Barbet. C; WS.

Trachyphonus purpuratus Yellow-billed Barbet. F; LF.

Indicatoridae

Indicator maculatus Spotted Honeyguide. F; LF and GF. Five netted, in south and north.

I. indicator Greater Honeyguide. F; WS.

I. minor Lesser Honeyguide. F; WS.

I. willcocksi Willcocks's Honeyguide. U; LF and GF.

Picidae

Jynx ruficollis Red-throated Wryneck. U; S.

Campethera abingoni Golden-tailed Woodpecker. U; S.

C. cailliautii Green-backed Woodpecker. F; LF and GF.

C. nivosa Buff-spotted Woodpecker. Two in GF in the north, 19 Mar.

C. caroli Brown-eared Woodpecker. F; GF along Mangaré stream (5°46'N, 12°32'E) in the south.

Dendropicos fuscescens Cardinal Woodpecker. F; GF.

D. xantholophus Yellow-crested Woodpecker. F; GF..

D. goertae Grey Woodpecker. U; WS.

D. obsoletus Brown-backed Woodpecker. U; S.

Eurylaimidae

Smithornis capensis African Broadbill. U; GF.

Hirundinidae

Psalidoprocne nitens Square-tailed Saw-wing. C; LF and GF.

P. pristoptera Black Saw-wing. A; LF and GF. Maximum 30, 9 Mar.

Riparia paludicola African Sand Martin. One sighting of two individuals along the Mékié River in the south.

R. riparia European Sand Martin. F; R. Maximum five, seen with *Hirundo preussi*, 10 Mar.

Pseudohirundo griseopyga Grey-rumped Swallow. U; R.

Hirundo senegalensis Mosque Swallow. U; R, WS and S.

H. abyssinica Lesser Striped Swallow. F; S.

H. daurica Red-rumped Swallow. U; R.

H. preussi Preuss's Cliff Swallow. C; R. Groups of up to five associated with other hirundines over the Djerem River.

H. aethiopica Ethiopian Swallow. U; Forest edge in the south.

H. rustica Barn Swallow. A; WS and S. A roost of over 5000 by the Djerem River in the north of the park.

Delichon urbica House Martin. C; WS and S. Maximum 10 together, 10 Mar. Usually with other hirundines.

Motacillidae

Motacilla flava Yellow Wagtail. A; WS and S. Races *flava* and *thunbergi* identified. Much less common where grazing cattle were absent.

M. clara Mountain Wagtail. U; along Mékié River in the south and along the Ngoum–Yoko road in the north.

M. aguimp African Pied Wagtail. C; R.

Anthus leucophrys Plain-backed Pipit. F; S. In more open areas of savanna, especially where recently burnt. Birds of race *zenkeri* appeared much paler both above and below than as illustrated in Keith *et al.* (1992).

A. trivialis Tree Pipit. A; WS and edges of GF. Up to 60 seen on a single day.

Macronyx croceus Yellow-throated Longclaw. F; S.

Campephagidae

Campephaga phoenicea Red-shouldered Cuckoo-Shrike. F; GF.

C. petiti Petit's Cuckoo-Shrike. F; GF.

C. quisqualis Purple-throated Cuckoo-Shrike. F; GF. Seen as far north as 6°8'N 12°52'E. All of the above three *Campephaga* species were occasionally present in the same mixed feeding party.

C. pectoralis White-breasted Cuckoo-Shrike. U; S.

Pycnonotidae

Andropadus virens Little Greenbul. A; GF.

A. virens Little Grey Greenbul. C; LF and GF.

A. ansorgei Ansorge's Greenbul. F; LF.

A. curvirostris Cameroon Sombre Greenbul. U; LF. Two netted in the south.

A. gracilirostris Slender-billed Greenbul. C; LF and GF.

A. latirostris Yellow-whiskered Greenbul. F; LF. Netted.

Baeopogon indicator Honeyguide Greenbul. A; LF and GF.

Chlorocichla flavicollis Yellow-throated Leaflove. A; GF and R. All were of ssp. *soror*.

Thescelocichla leucopleura Swamp Palm Greenbul. C; R.

Pyrhurus scandens Leaflove. C; GF.

Phyllastrephus icterinus Icterine Greenbul. U; LF. One netted.

P. albigularis White-throated Greenbul. F; LF. Three netted.

Bleda syndactyla Red-tailed Bristlebill. F; LF and GF north to beyond the northern boundary of the park.

B. notata Lesser Bristlebill. U; LF.

Criniger chloronotus Eastern-bearded Greenbul. F; LF and GF.

C. calurus Red-tailed Greenbul. F; LF and GF.

Pycnonotus barbatus Common Bulbul. A; S, and forest edge.

Turdidae

Stiphrornis erythrorhax Forest Robin. U; LF. Probably under-recorded.

Sheppardia cyornithopsis Lowland Akalat. U; LF. Two netted at Mékié River in the south.

Cossypha polioptera Grey-winged Robin-Chat. F; F-S, GF. Netted in the south and north.

C. cyanocampter Blue-shouldered Robin-Chat. U; LF along Djerem River.

C. natalensis Red-capped Robin-Chat. One sighting in primary forest along the Djerem River at 5°57'N, 12°52'E, 18 Mar. Until recently overlooked in Cameroon.

C. niveicapilla Snowy-crowned Robin-Chat. F; GF. Netted.

Alethe diademata Fire-crested Alethe. F; LF and GF.

A. poliocephala Brown-chested Alethe. C; LF and GF.

Neocossyphus rufus Red-tailed Ant-Thrush. F; GF. Formerly thought restricted to primary forest and, in Cameroon, only in the south and east (Louette 1981, Keith *et al.* 1992).

N. fraseri Rufous Flycatcher-Thrush. C; LF and GF.

Saxicola rubetra Whinchat. A; S. Most common in the north, up to 20 recorded per day.

Cercomela familiaris Familiar Chat. U; S.

Myrmecocichla nigra Sooty Chat. C; WS.

M. albifrons White-fronted Black Chat. F; WS. All birds encountered were of the white-shouldered variant.

Zoothera cameronensis Brown-eared Ground Thrush. One netted in forest understorey, 12 Mar.

Turdus pelios African Thrush C; GF.

Sylviidae

Bathmocercus rufus Black-faced Rufous Warbler. U; LF and adjacent GF.

Melocichla mentalis Moustached Grass Warbler. F; S with long grass.

Acrocephalus arundinaceus Great Reed Warbler. One in long grass in savanna, 19 Mar.

Hippolais pallida Olivaceous Warbler. U; GF.

H. icterina Icterine Warbler. U; S at Mékié River.

Cisticola erythrops Red-faced Cisticola. C; S.

C. cantans Singing Cisticola. U; WS.

C. lateralis Whistling Cisticola. A; S.

C. natalensis Croaking Cisticola. U; S.

Prinia subflava Tawny-flanked Prinia. A; long grass and scrub.

P. bairdii Banded Prinia. U; LF.

Schistolais leucopogon White-chinned Prinia. C; GF edge.

Apalis flavida Yellow-breasted Apalis. F; GF. Also in gardens in Mbakaou.

A. rufogularis Buff-throated Apalis. C; LF.

A. bamendae Bamenda Apalis. C; GF. Recorded from the northern boundary of the park south to 6°3'N, 12°50'E, in most gallery strips visited. These records further extend the range of this species (Bobo *et al.* 2001).

Camaroptera brachyura Grey-backed Camaroptera. A; S and F.

C. supercilialis Yellow-browed Camaroptera. F; LF.

C. chloronota Olive-green Camaroptera. C; LF, occasionally GF.

Macrosphenus flavicans Yellow Longbill. U; LF.

M. concolor Grey Longbill. F; LF.

Eremomela pusilla Senegal Eremomela. C; usually in small groups in WS.

E. badiceps Rufous-crowned Eremomela. F; forest edge along Mékié River.

Sylvietta brachyura Northern Crombec. F; S. A nest with young suspended c. 2.5 m from the ground in a bush, 12 Mar.

S. virens Green Crombec. C; LF and GF.

S. denti Lemon-bellied Crombec. U; LF.

Phylloscopus trochilus Willow Warbler. F; GF.

P. sibilatrix Wood Warbler. C; GF and LF edge.

Hypergerus atriceps Oriole Warbler. C; R in the north. Apparently absent from lowland forest.

Hyliota flavigaster Yellow-bellied Hyliota. F; WS and GF edge.

Hylia prasina Green Hylia. U; LF.

Muscicapidae

- Fraseria ocreata* Fraser's Forest Flycatcher. C; LF and GF.
F. cinerascens White-browed Forest Flycatcher. One netted in LF in the south.
Melaenormis edolioides Northern Black Flycatcher. F; WS.
Muscicapa striata Spotted Flycatcher. One, WS, 21 Mar.
M. gambagae Gambaga Flycatcher. F; S and forest edge.
M. caeruleascens Ashy Flycatcher. F; GF.
M. cassini Cassin's Flycatcher. F; R.
M. adusta Dusky Flycatcher. F; GF.
M. comitata Dusky-blue Flycatcher. U; LF.
M. infuscata Sooty Flycatcher. F; LF and adjacent GF.
Myioparus plumbeus Grey Tit-Flycatcher. C; F and S.
Ficedula hypoleuca Pied Flycatcher. F; WS and GF.

Monarchidae

- Erythrocercus mccallii* Chestnut-capped Flycatcher. C; LF.
Elminia longicauda African Blue Flycatcher. F; S and F edge.
Trochocercus nitens Blue-headed Crested Flycatcher. F; LF and adjacent GF.
Terpsiphone viridis African Paradise Flycatcher. C; GF and LF edge.
T. rufocinerea Rufous-vented Paradise Flycatcher. One with a mixed feeding party, LF; 17 Mar.
T. rufiventer Red-bellied Paradise Flycatcher. F; GF and LF.

Platysteiridae

- Megabyas flammulatus* Shrike-Flycatcher. U; LF.
Bias musicus Black-and-white Flycatcher. F; LF edge and GF.
Dyaphorophya castanea Chestnut Wattle-eye. F; LF. Eight netted.
D. tonsa White-spotted Wattle-eye. A male and a female netted together in GF.
D. chalybea Black-necked Wattle-eye. A singing bird in lowland forest along the Djerem River at c. 700 m, 5°56'N, 12°51'E, 18 Mar. Associated with submontane forest at 1050–1950 m in SW Cameroon but with lowland forest in the south.
Platysteira cyanea Scarlet-spectacled Wattle-eye. C; all habitats visited.
Batis senegalensis Senegal Batis. U; S.
B. minor Black-headed Batis. A; WS and F edge.

Timaliidae

- Illadopsis fulvescens* Brown Illadopsis. U; LF.
I. rufipennis Pale-breasted Illadopsis. F; LF and GF. Caught in net.
I. cleaveri Blackcap Illadopsis. F; LF.
I. puveli Puvel's Illadopsis. F; GF.
Ptyrticus turdinus Thrush-Babbler. C; GF.
Turdoides reinwardii Blackcap Babbler. F; R.
T. plebejus Brown Babbler. U; WS.

Paridae

- Parus leucomelas* White-winged Black Tit. C; WS.

P. albiventris White-bellied Tit. F; WS.

Anthoscopus parvulus West African Penduline Tit. U; S.

Certhiidae

Salpornis spilonotus Spotted Creeper. F; WS.

Nectariniidae

Anthreptes longuemarei Western Violet-backed Sunbird. F; GF.

A. seimundi Little Green Sunbird. A group of five in gallery forest, 12 Mar.

Deleornis fraseri Fraser's Sunbird. F; LF.

Cyanomitra verticalis Green-headed Sunbird. U; WS.

C. cyanolaema Blue-throated Brown Sunbird. C; GF and LF.

C. obscura Olive Sunbird. C; GF and LF.

Chalcomitra rubescens Green-throated Sunbird. F; LF and S.

Hedydipna collaris Collared Sunbird. F; GF.

H. platyura Pygmy Sunbird. U; LF.

Cinnyris chloropygius Olive-bellied Sunbird. U; Forest edge.

C. reichenowi Northern Double-collared Sunbird. F; WS.

C. bouvieri Orange-tufted Sunbird. C; WS.

C. venustus Variable Sunbird. One (of the white-bellied morph) at the northern boundary of the park, 20 Mar.

C. coccinigastra Splendid Sunbird. C; GF.

C. cupreus Copper Sunbird. F; in or near GF.

Zosteropidae

Zosterops senegalensis Yellow White-eye. A; in all habitats visited.

Oriolidae

Oriolus oriolus European Golden Oriole. F; WS.

O. auratus African Golden Oriole. U; WS and S.

O. brachyrhynchus Western Black-headed Oriole. C; LF and GF.

O. nigripennis Black-winged Oriole. U; GF.

Malaconotidae

Nilaus afer Brubru. C; WS.

Dryoscopus gambensis Northern Puffback. C; GF.

D. senegalensis Black-shouldered Puffback. A; LF and GF.

D. sabini Sabine's Puffback. A male in GF in the north of the park, 20 Mar.

Tchagra minuta Marsh Tchagra. U; R.

T. australis Brown-crowned Tchagra. F; WS.

T. senegala Black-crowned Tchagra. C; WS.

Laniarius luehderi Lühder's Bush Shrike. U; LF along Mangaré stream (5°46'N, 12°36'E).

L. aethiopicus Tropical Boubou. C; WS and GF.

L. barbatus Yellow-crowned Gonolek. U; GF and WS.

L. leucorhynchus Sooty Boubou. F; GF.

Malaconotus bocagei Grey-green Bush Shrike. C; GF.

M. sulfureopectus Sulphur-breasted Bush Shrike. F; in or near to GF.

Nicator chloris Western Nicator. F; LF and Forest edge.

N. vireo Yellow-throated Nicator. F; GF. Usually considered a lowland forest species, it was seemingly absent from the forest block in the south.

Dicruridae

Dicrurus ludwigii Square-tailed Drongo. C; GF; WS.

Dicrurus atripennis Shining Drongo. C; GF and LF.

D. adsimilis Fork-tailed Drongo. F; WS.

D. modestus Velvet-mantled Drongo. U; LF.

Sturnidae

Grafisia torquata White-collared Starling. A; F-S.

Lamprotornis purpureiceps Purple-headed Glossy Starling. C; LF and adjacent GF. Absent from GF in the north.

L. chloropterus Lesser Blue-eared Starling. C; WS in the north only.

L. splendidus Splendid Glossy Starling. A; LF and GF.

Cinnyricinclus leucogaster Violet-backed Starling. A; WS and GF.

Passeridae

Passer griseus Grey-headed Sparrow. C; Forest edge and farmbush along the Ngoum–Sengbe road.

Petronia dentata Bush Petronia. A; WS.

Ploceidae

Ploceus nigricollis Black-necked Weaver. F; GF.

P. nigerrimus Vieillot's Black Weaver. A; R. Many breeding colonies along the river.

P. cucullatus Village Weaver. C; near villages.

P. tricolor Yellow-mantled Weaver. U; LF.

P. bicolor Dark-backed Weaver. C; LF and GF.

Malimbus nitens Blue-billed Malimbe. U; GF.

M. malimbicus Crested Malimbe. F; LF. Two seen with nesting material.

M. cassini Cassin's Malimbe. U; GF.

M. rubricollis Red-headed Malimbe. F; GF just north of the lowland forest block.

Quelea erythrops Red-headed Quelea. U; S.

Q. quelea Red-billed Quelea. A; WS.

Euplectes macrourus Yellow-mantled Whydah. A; WS.

Estrildidae

Nigrita canicapilla Grey-crowned Negrofinch. F; LF and GF.

N. fusconota White-breasted Negrofinch. C; GF and LF.

Pytilia hypogrammica Yellow-winged Pytilia. F; WS.

Spermophaga haematina Western Bluebill. U; LF.

Mandingoa nitidula Green Twinspot. U; GF. One netted in the south.

Clytospiza monteiri Brown Twinspot. U; WS.

Euschistospiza dybowski Dybowski's Twinspot. C; WS, especially in the north. Breeding at 6°7'N, 12°27'E, 21 Mar: both sexes apparently tending young in a rather large, untidy, spherical nest c. 3 m above ground in a bush alongside a large boulder.

Lagonosticta rara Black-bellied Firefinch. C; WS.

L. rufopicta Bar-breasted Firefinch. U; WS.

L. rubricata African Firefinch. A male with other seedeaters in S in the north, 20 Mar.

Estrilda melpoda Orange-cheeked Waxbill. C; WS.

E. nonnula Black-crowned Waxbill. U; WS.

Uraeginthus bengalus Red-cheeked Cordon-bleu. F; locally in the north only. Common just north of the park.

Lonchura cucullata Bronze Mannikin. C; WS.

L. bicolor Black-and-white Mannikin. U; WS.

Viduidae

Vidua macroura Pin-tailed Whydah. One near Sengbe on the western boundary of the park.

V. interjecta Exclamatory Paradise Whydah. A female in WS, 11 Mar. Identified primarily on known range and the presence in the area of its host *Pytilia hypogrammica* (Payne 1997).

Fringillidae

Serinus mozambicus Yellow-fronted Canary. C; WS.

S. gularis Streaky-headed Seed-eater. U; S.

Emberizidae

Emberiza tahapisi Cinnamon-breasted Rock Bunting. U; S.

E. affinis Brown-rumped Bunting. U; WS.

E. cabanisi Cabanis Bunting. F; WS.

Discussion

A total of 362 species was confirmed in the park. *Buteo buteo* was recorded for the fourth time in Cameroon. The records of *Accipiter ovampensis*, *Cossypha natalensis* and *Apalis flavida* all confirm the recent increase in records of these species that now appear more common and widespread than previously thought. *Grafisia torquata*, a typical species of transitional area was better represented in the park than in surrounding areas. Breeding was recorded for the uncommon *Vanellus superciliosus* and a nest of *Euschistospiza dybowskii* was found. The park contains substantial numbers of certain Palearctic migrants, notably *Hirundo rustica*, *Anthus trivialis* and *Saxicola rubetra*.

The gallery forest strips contained an avifauna more distinct from the park's lowland forest than anticipated. Several species (e.g. *Chrysococcyx flavigularis*, *Neocossyphus rufus*, *Nicator vireo*) usually associated with lowland rainforest were found in the gallery forest but apparently absent from the lowland forest. *Apalis bamendae* was common in most gallery forests visited, further increasing its known range; in the extensive lowland rainforest towards the south it was replaced by *A. rufogularis*, suggesting that the two species are mutually exclusive (see also Bobo *et al.* 2001). Some forest species were found well to the north of their known range in

Cameroon, such as *Gymnobucco peli*, *Colomba unicincta*, *Fringilla lathami*, *Chrysococcyx flavigularis*, *Tockus hartlaubi* and *T. camurus*.

The inventory probably shows a bias towards gallery forest and savanna species against those of lowland rainforest. As the latter habitat occurs in the more remote regions of the park less time was spent there than would have been desirable to make an accurate assessment of its avifauna. It is likely that a significant number of forest species have therefore remained unrecorded. Some apparent absences may nevertheless be genuine, especially those of some otherwise common forest species such as Eastern Bearded Greenbul *Crinifer chloronotus* and Naked-faced Barbet *Gymnobucco calvus*, mostly confined to the Atlantic forest in Cameroon. Several other otherwise abundant forest species were found in greatly reduced numbers. The fact that these forests lie so far to the north is likely to explain these absences. This forest area would greatly repay further scrutiny.

Large numbers of nightjars, including *Caprimulgus climacurus*, *C. nigriscapularis* and *Macrodipteryx longipennis* were observed at dusk along the Mbakaou-Tibati road just to the north of the park. It is therefore likely that these species were under-recorded inside the park.

With over 360 species confirmed for the National Park and at least a further 40 to be expected, Mbam and Djerem constitutes a priority area for conservation in Cameroon. One of the most interesting features of the site is its position at the ecotone between lowland forest and sudano-guinean savannas with an interrupted gradient and a complex mosaic between these two biomes. Should major climate changes occur in the next decades, this site would most likely conserve distinct components of both biomes and their bird species.

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