

Short Notes — Notes Courtes

A record of Black-necked Grebe *Podiceps nigricollis* in The Gambia in 1989 constitutes an addition to the national list

The Palaearctic population of Black-necked Grebe *Podiceps nigricollis nigricollis* reaches coastal West Africa in the northern winter, although as a regular occurrence this appears to be a relatively recent phenomenon. Before the 1990s there were few records of this species south of Morocco, where it winters irregularly and generally in small numbers (maximum counts in the 1990s include 300 at Douyeit in 1992, 206 at Sebkha Bou-Areg in 1995, and 325 at Barrage Mohamed V in 1995: Thévenot *et al.* 2003). However, further east in North Africa it is much more widespread and abundant at suitable wetlands, with counts of up to 850 birds in the 1970s in the El Kala wetlands of Algeria (Isenmann & Moali 2000) and concentrations in Tunisia of up to 3800 at the Lac de Tunis, 5800 at Sidi Mansour and 3100 at Moknine (Isenmann *et al.* 2005). Important non-breeding sites for this population in Egypt are Lake Qarun, where over 10,000 were recorded in 1979 and 1980 (Goodman & Meininger 1989) and Lake Nasser, where 5811 have been recorded (Baha el Din 1999). The first record from Senegal was of three birds at the Parc National des Oiseaux du Djoudj in the Senegal Delta in December 1980 (Morel & Morel 1990). Three birds were also seen in the Parc National du Banc d'Arguin in Mauritania in March 1986 (Isenmann 2006).

Since 1990 it has become a more regular visitor to N Senegal, in Oct–Nov, while there are records of vagrants during the northern winter, in S Niger, N Nigeria and SW Cameroon (Borrow & Demey 2001). Counts of 50 or more in coastal West Africa in 1994, 1995 and 1996 indicate an extension of the non-breeding range to the wetlands of the Senegal Delta during the 1990s (Dodman & Rose 1997), in increasing numbers, *e.g.* 130 at Chatt Boul in Mauritania in Jan 1997 (Dodman *et al.* 1997) and 328 in the delta wetlands of Mauritania in Jan 1999 (Dodman & Diagana 2003). The Palaearctic population is estimated at 159,000–288,000 (Wetlands International 2006).

The Black-necked Grebe is currently not listed for The Gambia (Barlow *et al.* 1997). On 4 Nov 1989, A. Makin (*per* T. Disley pers. comm.) was informed by three birdwatchers of a Black-necked Grebe at Kotu Sewage Farm, Kombo, St Mary Division in coastal Gambia (13°28'N, 16°43'W); the bird had reportedly been seen by others previously. The next day, AM photographed a single Black-necked Grebe swimming with a small group of White-faced Whistling Ducks *Dendrocygna viduata* at the sewage farm (Fig. 1). The bird was referred to by AM as a “typical winter adult”. It was also present on 7 Nov but could not be found on 12 Nov. Black-necked Grebe is easily separated from the widespread resident and also locally increasing Little Grebe *Tachybaptus ruficollis* by its larger size, greyer plumage, pale cheeks and distinctive head shape with slightly upturned bill (Barlow *et al.* 1997).



Figure 1. Black-necked Grebe and White-faced Whistling Ducks, Kotu Sewage Farm, The Gambia, 5 Nov 1989 (photo: A. Makin).

A request for further observations of Black-necked Grebe in The Gambia, made in early 2010 by CRB via the AfricanBirding e-mail discussion list and more generally, drew no response. Therefore, this record constitutes the first and only known record to date for Black-necked Grebe for The Gambia. Given the wintering range expansion of this population to the Senegal Delta in the 1990s, it is perhaps surprising that there have been no further records in the coastal wetlands of The Gambia.

Andrew Makin and Tony Disley kindly furnished the information and made this note possible.

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Un oiseau nouveau au Burundi: le Moineau domestique *Passer domesticus*

Le Moineau domestique *Passer domesticus* est une espèce d'origine paléarctique, notée dans différents pays de l'Ouest africain jusqu'au Tchad, et devenue commune en Afrique australe (Anderson 2006, Summers-Smith 2009). La sous-espèce *indicus* introduite à Durban en Afrique du Sud vers les années 1900 a connu par la suite une expansion vers tous les pays du sud du continent jusqu'en République Démocratique du Congo, en Tanzanie et jusqu'au Kenya (Anderson 2006). Il est donc observé dans les pays limitrophes du Burundi. Dans la RDC, l'oiseau se trouve dans certaines régions du Sud Est, aux confins de la Tanzanie (Anderson 2006). Dans ce pays, il a été introduit à partir de Dar-es-Salaam en 1984 en provenance de la Zambie et a continué son expansion vers l'Ouest (<http://tanzaniabirdatlas.com/maps/distribution-maps/1204.pdf>, consulté 19 jan 2011). Dès 2008, ce moineau a été signalé au Rwanda, à Gitarama et aux portes de la ville de Kigali (Anonymous 2009, Nsabagasani 2009).

Le Moineau domestique, qui n'avait jamais été signalé sur le territoire burundais (Schouteden 1966) a été observé au moins à trois endroits différents en 2009. La reconnaissance de cette espèce a été faite en notant la calotte grise des mâles, une barre alaire blanche et une bavette noire descendant vers la gorge (Sinclair & Ryan 2003), patron de plumage très distinct de celui du Moineau à tête grise *Passer griseus*.