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FURTHER BIRD RECORDS FROM THE REPUBLIC OF TOGO

by Robert A. Cheke and J. Frank Walsh

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During 1983 R.A.C. was in Togo from late May until the end of July and J.F.W. made a short trip in June, visits which provided opportunities for us to augment our previous records from Togo (Cheke & Walsh 1980, Cheke 1982a). During his stay J.F.W. travelled the length of the country from the Upper Volta border to the coast. R.A.C. was again based in Lama-Kara but made a number of excursions, including a visit to a forested area near Badou.

Species which we had not previously noted are marked with asterisks in the list which follows. Other records are those of uncommon species, breeding, large flocks, known migrants, records omitted from the earlier papers and some of birds seen by George and Wilma Bouman (G. & W.B.), who have resided in Lama-Kara for more than two years. All dates refer to 1983 unless otherwise stated, and the coordinates of named sites are listed in the appendix. The sequence and nomenclature follow Hall & Moreau (1970) and Snow (1978).

Phalacrocorax africanus Several seen at pools between Naboulgou and Sansanne-Mango on 12 June.

Ardeola ralloides One north of Naboulgou on 12 June.

Egretta garzetta Two near Naboulgou on 12 June.

Ciconia abdimii Two near Sansanne-Mango on 27 May and 12 June.

Dendrocygna viduata More than 500 near Sansanne-Mango on 29 July.

Nettapus auritus Three near Sansanne-Mango on 3 June and four near Naboulgou on 29 July.

**Thalassornis leuconotus* On 17 November 1981 in the Mono river at 07° 09'N, 01° 27'E, R.A.C. noticed a water-bird, whose body was low in the water, which was at first sight taken to be a grebe but when examined through binoculars it was clearly a small duck without any obvious tail, mostly dark brown but with distinctly paler cheeks and scoter-like bill. It did not take flight but swam methodically towards one bank holding its head and neck up yet tilted backwards, but also it kept bobbing its head up and down in a jerky display until it reached the bank where it disappeared under some over-hanging vegetation. *T. leuconotus* is usually only found much further north in West Africa but it is possible that this and other birds had been forced south by drought conditions at the time. The rainfall over much of the region during October 1981 was less than a third of the equivalent figure for 1980 (Cheke & Gams 1983) and drought conditions have persisted over much of West Africa since 1968 (Lamb 1982, Nicholson 1983).

**Circaetus cinereus* One north of Barkoissi on 12 June and one near Naboulgou on 29 July.

C. cinerascens One near Naboulgou on 12 June.

**Accipiter melanoleucus* An adult near Tchebebe on 20 July. No recent records but Reichenow (1897) refers to one at Bismarckburg, which was near Katchanke and only about 40 km S.W. of Tchebebe.

Lophæetus occipitalis One near Landa-Pozanda in December 1982 (G. & W.B.).

Polemaetus bellicosus One near Naboulgou on 3 June and other single birds at Djande on 5 June and at Bagan on 5 & 25 July.

Aquila rapax Two at Fazao on 13 June.

Haliaeetus vocifer One near Bagan on 26 July.

**Aviceda cuculoides* Six seen soaring in the northern part of the Keran reserve near Sansanne-Mango on 3 June. Recorded by De Roo *et al.* (1969).

Falco peregrinus One near Cinkanse on 3 June.

F. ardosiaceus One seen regularly near Landa-Pozanda during June and July. In early June one was seen flying purposefully back and forth from a site and was once carrying a small snake and so may have been nesting.

F. alopex One south of Pawa on 10 June.

Francolinus bicalcaratus Abundant. One was seen with young near Landa-Pozanda on 8 July.

Podica senegalensis One in the Na river near Sokode on 15 June, one in the Ghan-Houa river at Djodji on 19 July and one in the Mo river near Bagan on 25 July.

Balearica pavonina Two on the plain beside the Oti river near Sansanne-Mango on 12 June (G. & W.B.) and five there on 29 July.

Vanellus spinosus A pair south of Sansanne-Mango on 12 June.

Charadrius forbesi Two at Landa-Pozanda on 18 June and on there on 22 June.

**Glareola cinerea* One hawking for insects beside the Oti river, which was then dry and sandy, near Sansanne-Mango on 27 May.

G. nuchalis liberiae At least two pairs were at the site on the Kara river near Landa-Pozanda described by Cheke (1980, 1982b) from late May until the end of July. Two eggs were found near each other on 29 May. The remains of one of these was found on 10 June but whether a chick had hatched from it is uncertain. The second egg was seen to be incubated, briefly, on 12 June, was still present on 24 June but had disappeared by 1 July. It may have been added. Five adults were seen on 29 May, 9, 15 & 24 July and a sixth bird was also present on 9 July but it was not seen well enough to be sure of its age.

**Sterna maxima* Four seen near Lome on 8 June. Recorded by Browne (1980).

Treron calva One near Landa-Pozanda on 16 July and two there on 24 July.

**Clamator jacobinus* Three near Sansanne-Mango on 29 July. Recorded from Togo in August 1968 by De Roo *et al.* (1969).

C. levaillantii One at Pawa on 11 June and two near Landa-Pozanda on 16 July.

Cuculus solitarius Heard calling at Djande on 5 June and Pawa on 11 June.

C. gularis One near Dapaon on 12 June and one 10 km south of Kande on 3 July.

Chrysococcyx klaas Two near Landa-Pozanda on 24 July.

C. caprius Heard calling at Lome on 8 June, Landa-Pozanda on 11 June, Naboulgou 12 June and Badou 19 July.

**Ceuthmochares aereus* One near Tomegbe on 19 July. Recorded by Dekeyser (1951), Douaud (1956) and De Roo et al. (1971, 1972).

**Otus leucotis* One seen between Landa-Pozanda and Lama-Kara on 11 June. Recorded by De Roo et al. (1969, 1971) and by De Roo (1970).

Glaucidium perlatum One heard near Landa-Pozanda on 24 July.

**Caprimulgus aegyptius* At 1850 hours after dusk on 10 June we both saw four smallish nightjars on the dirt road between Landa-Pozanda and Lama-Kara. The birds were not together but shared the habit of squatting beside the road and, in the dazzle of vehicle head-lights, allowed themselves to be approached closely. None were seen the following night but at 1905 hours on 12 June, R.A.C. observed one there again. The following composite description led to our identification of them as Egyptian nightjars. Small, delicate-featured nightjar lacking any bold markings. Crown, nape, wing coverts and back grey. Face pale grey with contrasting much paler cheeks and lores. No collar. Throat and chin pale grey contrasting with darker grey breast. Cream coloured or fawn supercilium stretching above eye from lores to front of ear coverts. Eye dark. Eye-ring pinkish red. Bill mostly dark but very pale at base. Legs and feet pale grey. Grey parts of body plumage finely barred and vermiculated with black but lacking stripes. Cream or fawn stripe on either side of back when wings folded. Two dark wing bars formed by markings on upper wing coverts and secondaries. Outer primaries with at least eight black bars interspersed with rufous brown. All of under-surface of wings pale grey, finely barred with black. No white on the wing seen in flight. Tail short; end almost square but with rounded corners. Central tail feathers grey, finely barred and vermiculated with black. Outer tail feathers with at least five dark blotches separated by bold white or very pale grey patches. Folded wings almost as long as tail.

The overall grey rather than sandy appearance suggests *C. a. aegyptius* rather than *C. a. saharae*. The exceptionally dry conditions prevalent in early 1983 and the late start to the rainy season may have accounted for these birds being so far out of their previously recorded range. The species' range may be altering as a result of the persistent droughts (Lamb 1982, Nicholson 1983).

No nightjars were seen after dusk along the same route on 7 and 11 June nor thereafter, suggesting that the birds which were seen were moving through the area.

**Macrodipteryx longipennis* Many seen near Kande in March and April by G. & W.B., who also saw one near Landa-Pozanda in April. Recorded from Togo by De Roo (1970) and De Roo et al. (1971, 1972).

Telacanthura ussheri Two at Djodji on 20 July.

**Apus apus* On 22 May, R.A.C., Dr J. Grunewald and Dr M. Karam had seen a flock of more than 200 over a lake at Loubila near Ouagadougou in Upper Volta but the passage continued even later as the following records from Upper Volta and Togo show. On 27 May at 1120 hours about 120 were seen near Tenkodogo in Upper Volta, flying on the edge of a rainstorm (see Moreau 1972 for remarks on swifts and storms) and another 20 were seen at Bitou, still in Upper Volta. However at the Cinkanse border post, in Togo, at 1345 hours 200 or more swifts were seen flying round and round a microwave tower, screaming as they did so. On 3 June about 40 were seen in the Naboulgou area and another six were observed at Sara-Kawa on 4 June.

A. caffer. Singles at Naboulgou on 3 June, Landa-Pozanda on 4 June, Totira on 3 July and a party of 20 at Pawa on 11 June.

A. melba (treated as *Tachymarptis melba* by Snow 1978) On 3 June J.F.W. saw one together with 20 *A. apus* at Naboulgou and a further 100 *A. melba* together with another 20 *A. apus* and a single *A. caffer* a few kilometres further south. These birds were feeding and no direction of movement was noted but the *A. melba* were very grey birds, paler than those seen in Europe suggesting that they were *A. m. tuneti*: if so, this would support Moreau (1972) who stated that since this subspecies leaves the Maghreb in September it must enter tropical Africa. At 1815 hours on 1 July P.A.C. saw at least 60 *A. melba* at Landa-Pozanda. These birds were moving across the Kara river in small parties, pausing to feed over the river and above the gallery forest just above tree height, and disappeared in a northward direction, away from an on-coming storm front. The failing evening light prevented attempts at sub-specific identification. See Cheke (1982a) for discussion of other Togolese records.

Ceryle maxima One at Landa-Pozanda on 4 and 11 June and on 22 July.

Halcyon senegalensis One at Djodji on 20 July.

**H. malimbica* Between 0730 and 0820 hours on 20 July, two were watched at Djodji. They were displaying to each other on a branch near the top of a tree by opening and shutting their wings in quick succession. One of the birds was more persistent with its displays than the other. At one stage on *H. senegalensis* (see above) landed on the end of the same branch but, after having both looked at it the *H. malimbica* carried on regardless with their displays. Later only one *H. malimbica* remained on the branch where it continued to display on its own and occasionally uttered raucous cries, typical of the species. Another was seen on the same day near Badou and on 29 July another was observed at Naboulgou in gallery forest beside the Koumougou river. Although opened-wing displays are well known in *Halcyon*, Fry (1980) stated that they had not yet been described for *H. malimbica*.

Merops pusillus One at Pewa on 11 June.

M. albicollis On 8 June about 50 were seen on the coast close to the border with Benin. One at Bafilo on 10 June and 70 flying north and circling in a thermal above Bafilo the next day.

M. nubicus Twenty, perched on wires 10 km north of Sansanne-Mango on 12 June.

Coracias abyssinica Two at Sansanne-Mango on 27 May and singles near Naboulgou on 3 June, at Landa-Pozanda on 4 June and 10 km south of Dapaon on 12 June.

C. cyanogaster A pair near Landa-Pozanda on 15 and 16 July.

**Bucorvus abyssinicus* A pair seen 15 km south of Bagan on 5 July.

**Tropicranus albocristatus* One in thick forest near Tomegbe on 19 July. Recorded from Toxo by Dekeyser (1951) and De Roo *et al.* (1971).

**Gymnobucco calvus* A party of six seen at Djodji on 20 July.

Pogoniulus chrysoconus This species was inadvertently listed as *P. pusillus* in Cheke & Walsh (1980 part 2), reproducing the transposition error in Snow (1978), pointed out by Snow (1979).

**Indicator indicator* One calling near Bafilo on 11 June. Recorded by De Roo *et al.* (1971).

Dendropicos fuscescens Three records during July from near Landa-Pozanda.

Hirundo lucida One at Djamde on 5 June, three near Bafilo and four at Lama-Kara on 11 June, one at Sara-Kawa on 3 July, two at Fazao on 6 July, four near Landa-Pozanda on 16 July and one there on 24 July.

- H. senegalensis* One at Pawa on 11 June, two near Landa-Pozanda on 24 June and a pair at Badou on 19 July.
- H. abyssinica* About twenty pairs nested under a bridge at Titira in June and July. Also many records from the Lama-Kara area in May-July.
- H. fuligula* Several in the Aledjo area, mid-June.
- H. preussi* More than fifty feeding over the Oti river near Sansanne-Mango on 27 May and three there on 29 July. Several near Naboulqou on 12 June. Nests present under the bridge over the Keran river at Titira on 3 July but no adults seen.
- Psalidoprocne obscura* Three 20 km south of Bagan on 5 July.
- Macronyx croceus* Two near Landa-Pozanda on 18 June.
- Motacilla aguimp* A pair seen carrying food at Lama-Kara on 11 June and juveniles seen amongst the many presents at Badou on 19 July.
- Campephaga phoenicea* A single male seen near Landa-Pozanda on 7 June and 15 & 24 July.
- Chlorocichla flavicollis* Two near Landa-Pozanda on 16 July and one there on 24 July.
- Cercomela familiaris* Two at Pawa on 11 June and one north of Defale on 3 July.
- Myrmecocichla cinnamomeiventris* A white-crowned male seen at Djamde on 5 June and another with a female at Pawa on 11 June.
- Cossypha albicapilla* One near Landa-Pozanda on 16 July.
- Turdus pelios* One of a pair seen repeatedly collecting worms and flying to a presumed nest site at Lama-Kara on 11 June.
- **Luscinia megarhynchos* One at Djamde on 5 June, a very late date. Recorded by Browne (1980), De Roo (1970) and De Roo et al. (1972).
- Sphenoeacus mentalis* One seen singing near Landa-Pozanda on 16 & 24 July.
- **Cisticola erythrops* One at Lama-Kara on 4 June and another near Landa-Pozanda on 16 July. Recorded by Browne (1980), De Roo et al. (1969, 1971, 1972) and De Roo (1970).
- C. natalensis* One singing at Sara-Kawa on 4 June.
- C. brachyptera* One singing near Lama-Kara from 3 June until at least 14 July.
- C. aberrans* Two, one singing, Djamde on 5 June and one, also singing, at Pawa on 11 June.
- C. galactotes* Singing at Landa-Pozanda on 4 & 5 June.
- Heliolais erythroptera* Present at Pawa on 11 June.
- Sylvietta brachyura* One at Djamde on 5 June.
- Melaenornis edoloides* One near Lama-Kara from 8 July until at least 27 July.
- Batis senegalensis* One at Pawa on 11 June.
- Anthreptes collaris* One at Djamde on 5 June.
- Nectarinia pulchella* A male in eclipse plumage at Pawa on 11 June.
- **N. adelberti* A pair at Badou on 19 July. Recorded by De Roo et al. (1969).

- Emberiza tahapsi* One at Péwa on 11 June.
- Ploceus velatus* One near Landa-Pozanda on 16 and 24 July.
- P. heuglini* A pair near Landa-Pozanda on 16 & 24 July.
- P. luteolus* One near Sansanné-Mango on 29 July.
- **P. nigricollis brachypterus* A female at Badou on 19 July. Recorded by Browne (1990), De Roo *et al.* (1969, 1971) and De Roo (1970).
- **Malimbus rubricollis* A male seen near Tomegbe on 19 July. Recorded by De Roo *et al.* (1971, 1972).
- Lagonosticta rara* A pair at Péwa on 11 June.
- Lonchura cucullata* Blood smears taken from a bird found freshly dead near Lama-Kara in July were examined by M.A. Peirce and showed that the bird had been parasitised with *Atoxoplasma* sp and *Haemoproteus orizivora*.
- **L. bicolor* A pair seen on the coast near Lomé on 8 June. Recorded by De Roo *et al.* (1969, 1971, 1972) and De Roo (1970).
- Cinnyricinclus leucogaster* A male seen at Péwa on 11 June and a pair at Landa-Pozanda on the same date.

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Summary

Records of birds of interest seen in Togo, mostly during the 1983 wet season, are provided. These include information on 23 species which were not included in previous lists by the authors (Cheke & Walsh 1980, Cheke 1982).

Résumé

Renseignements sur des oiseaux intéressants vus au Togo, la plupart pendant 1983 en saison des pluies, sont donnés. 23 espèces présentées ne furent pas incluses dans des listes déjà publiées par les auteurs (Cheke et Walsh 1980, Cheke 1982).

GAZETTEER

Aledjo	09°15'N	01°12'E
Barou	07°35'N	00°36'E
Rafilo	09°21'N	01°16'E
Baran	09°00'N	00°40'E
Barkoissi	10°33'N	00°18'E
Bitou (Upper Volta)	11°16'N	00°18'W
Cinkanse	11°06'N	00°01'E
Dapaon	10°51'N	00°12'E
Défalé	09°53'N	01°05'E
Djandé	09°32'N	01°03'E
Djodji	07°40'N	00°35'E
Fazao	08°42'N	00°46'E
Kandé	09°58'N	01°02'E
Katchanké	08°12'N	00°41'E
Lama-Kara	09°33'N	01°12'E
Landa-Pozanda	09°31'N	01°17'E
Lomé	06°08'N	01°13'E
Nahoulgou	10°11'N	00°48'E
Ouaquadougou (Upper Volta)	12°22'N	01°31'W
Péwa	09°16'N	01°14'E
Sara-Kawa	09°38'N	01°01'E
Sokodé	08°15'N	01°08'E
Sansanné-Mango	10°21'N	00°28'E
Tenkokoogo (Upper Volta)	11°47'N	00°22'W
Tchébébé	08°26'N	00°59'E
Titira	10°00'N	01°07'E
Tomegbé	07°31'N	00°36'E

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