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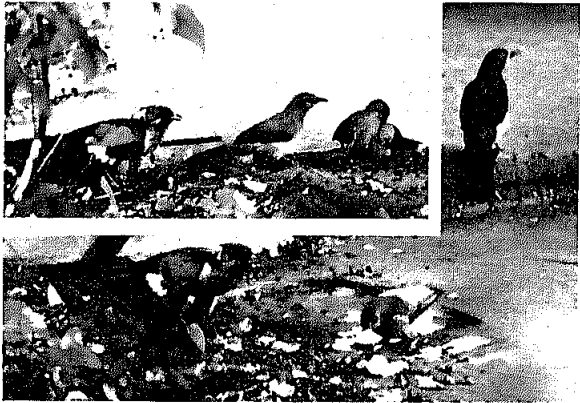
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Upper figure: Juvenile Levillant's Cuckoo *Clamator levillanti* accompanied by adult Brown Babblers *Turdoides plebejus*, The Gambia, June 1983. Photos: Amberley Moore.

Lower figure: Brown Babbler *Turdoides plebejus* at nest, The Gambia. Photo: Michael Gore.

LEVAILLANT'S CUCKOO CLAMATOR LEVAILLANTI FED BY BROWN BABBLERS TURDOIDES PLEBEJUS - Levaillant's Cuckoo *Clamator levaillanti* is a common breeding visitor in The Gambia, arriving just before the onset of the rains. Throughout Africa it parasitizes babblers of the genus *Turdoides*; in The Gambia it has been recorded as parasitizing Blackcap Babblers *T. reinwardti* and there are also records of young being fed by Brown Babblers *T. plebejus* (Gore 1981, *Birds of The Gambia*, B.O.U., London). The only other host, anywhere in Africa, is the Chestnut-bellied Starling *Spreo pulcher* (Lamarche 1980, *Malimbus* 2: 149; Gore, *op. cit.*).

An adult Levaillant's Cuckoo was seen in the Medical Research Council Compound at Fajara in The Gambia (13°27'N 16°34'W) on 15 June 1983, 3 days before the first rain of the season, and what was probably the same bird was seen several times until 4 September. During the second week of October an immature Levaillant's Cuckoo was seen in the same compound with a party of four adult Brown Babblers. The babblers fed on the ground, turning over fallen leaves, but the Cuckoo made no attempt to feed itself. It would advance towards one of the babblers with its wings slightly raised and trembling and it cried continuously until fed. Only two of the babblers fed it, and when it sometimes importuned the 'wrong' babbler, it was ignored.

On 20 October a young Levaillant's Cuckoo was seen in the compound making short flights from the top of a *Casuarina* tree; the cry resembled that of an adult bird.

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NOTES ON THE NESTING OF TWO LITTLE KNOWN SPECIES OF BEE-EATERS IN CAMEROUN - While conducting surveys for the International Council for Bird Preservation's expedition to montane forests of the Republic of Cameroun, I had the opportunity to observe nesting activities of Blue-breasted Bee-eaters *Merops variegatus* and Black Bee-eaters *M. gularis*. Little is known of the breeding biology of *M. variegatus*.

Nests have been found in Cameroun, Zaire, Tanzania, Zambia and Ethiopia, but none have been described in detail (C.H. Fry, 1984, *The Bee-eaters*, Poyser, p. 62). Blue-breasted Bee-eaters were common on Mt. Manengouba crater (5°03'N, 9°50'E, altitude 1900-2300 m), and less common on Mt. Oku (6°12'N, 10°28'E, altitude 2200-2400 m). They were not present above 2400 m on Mt. Oku even though apparently suitable habitat was available up to 3000 m. Seven pairs on Mt. Manengouba, which occupied burnt-over areas, had already begun breeding activities (allofeeding, copulation, nest excavation and egg-laying) by 21 February. One pair excavated a 50 cm tunnel with incomplete chamber two days after a burn. In unburnt areas birds were less advanced with nesting. One male offered a female a grasshopper and a tug-or-war ensued which ended with the male consuming the insect; another pair foraged and sat together for an hour with no allofeeding or courtship attempts. All pairs on Mt. Oku occupied burned areas by March 31, when two nests were found. Thus it seems that in the Cameroun highlands Blue-breasted Bee-eaters wait for their territories to burn before they commence