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BIRDS OF LAGOS, NIGERIA

by J. Gee and J. Heigham

(Continued from p. 51)

Part II

SYSTEMATIC LIST

This part of the paper treats systematically all species observed at Lagos during the period 1966 through 1975 together with those mentioned in the literature as having occurred there previously. Nomenclature and sequence follow Parker (1970), which is based on White (1960-1965), except that we have awarded specific status to Centropus toulou and Motacilla aguimp.

The bar-graphs summarize by month the recorded observations of the species. When no symbol is shown against a species it is because the date(s) of occurrence are not known. Symbols in the bar-graphs signify the following:

+++++	many observations	
+ + + + +	few observations	
S S	reported by Sander (1956-57)	} Not recorded 1966-1975
B B	reported by Bannerman (1930-51, 1953) or by Bates (1930)	

An asterisk to the left of the bar-graph indicates that one or more specimens of that species was secured during 1966-1975 and preserved.

'Current Status and Remarks' give the present status (1966-1975) including relative abundance, and compare present with former status according to Sander (1956-57). If there is no mention of the former status, it means that no appreciable change has been observed. This sections also presents dates and other details for species considered rare or otherwise deserving justification, and includes very brief comments on habits, nesting, etc. where that is considered new or useful. Abbreviations:

RE - permanent resident	
BR - breeds in Lagos area	
PM - Palearctic migrant	DIMW - D. I. M. Wallace
EM - Ethiopian migrant	JBH - J. B. Heigham
DSV - dry season visitor	JHE - J. H. Elgood
RSV - rainy season visitor	JPG - J. P. Gee
OV - occasional visitor	MFF - M. F. Forrester
? - status uncertain	
NRR - no recent record (1966-75)	
NLS - not listed by Sander	

Species not included

Sander listed four species not recognised herein. Egretta gularis has now been incorporated in Egretta garzetta. Both Sander and Bannerman included Sterna anaethetus on the basis of Bourdillon's 1941/42 report that he found it the second commonest of the terns in and around Lagos harbour. Although anaethetus nests on islands in the Gulf of Guinea, there have been no other records and it is highly unlikely it was ever common in our area. Cisticola juncidis has been removed primarily on the basis of Sander's description of its voice, which fits galactotes not juncidis; there have been no other records at Lagos or elsewhere on the south-western coast of Nigeria. Finally, Nectarinia johannae, which Sander included on the basis of one sight record of a presumed female, has been deleted because Lagos is well outside its known range and additional evidence should be obtained before it is included.

During 1966-75 single spoonbills Platalea sp. were twice seen at Lagos but not identified as to species. Other species which have not been included for lack of sufficient evidence are Buteo buteo, Falco chiquera, Burhinus oedipnemos, Calidris bairdii, Psalidoprocne nitens, Cisticola cantans and Nectarinia minulla. These species are mentioned only because they have been reported elsewhere in recent literature, and because it is felt that some of them may eventually prove to be present at Lagos.

Acknowledgements

We are indebted particularly to D. I. M. Wallace whose work in the Tarkwa and Apapa areas produced many significant records of maritime and "northern" species and who has generously made his records available for this paper. We are most indebted to J. H. Elgood, not only for his contributions in the field, but especially for his advice and guidance in the preparation of this paper. We also wish to acknowledge the field contributions of M. F. Forrester and J. F. Brown. Finally much use has been made of earlier references to the Lagos area in previous issues of this Bulletin.

References

- Bates, G. L. (1930) Handbook of the Birds of West Africa. John Bale Sons & Danielsson Ltd., London
- Parker, R. H. (1970) A Check List of Nigerian Birds. Published privately
- Sander, F. (1956-57) A list of birds of Lagos and its environs, with brief notes on their status. Nigerian Field 21 (4) & 22 (1,2)
- Wallace, D. I. M. (1973) Sea birds at Lagos and in the Gulf of Guinea. Ibis 115:559-571

CURRENT STATUS AND REMARKS

J F M A M J J A S O N D											
POCIPITIDAE											
Podiceps ruficollis	+	+						+			
PROCELLARIIDAE											
Oceanites oceanicus				S							
PELECANIDAE											
Pelecanus onocrotalus		+	+								+
P. rufescens	S	+	+	S				S	S	S	
SULIDAE											
Sula leucogaster				S	+	+		S			
PHALACROCORACIDAE											
Phalacrocorax africanus											
Anhinga rufa	S	S	S	S	S	S	S	S	S	S	S
ALCEDIDAE											
Alcedo minutus											
L. sturnij	+	S		S	+			+			+
Rhythmenus rufiventris	+	?						?			

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out morning of 9/4/73; flight contained many Milvus
immigrans, at least 4 Pernis apivorus and one bird which
was either Aquila wahlbergi or dark phase of Hiraeetus
penatus - JFG. NLS.

NRR. Only date mentioned by Sander is for single bird near Taikwa one 19/1 but he also mentioned single bird which remained for several years near Tanimeda.

ER - DSV. Abundant in dry season. Nested successfully Jan 1971 Victoria Island. Attempts to nest in same tree 1969 and 1970 apparently unsuccessful. Black-billed bird observed Jan 1971 indicates some birds of European race reach Lagos.

PM. Uncommon. See remarks under Aquila rapax. Most records from Isieri and Apapa. NLS.

BR-RE. Common Isleri. Juvenile seen begging food 20/6/70. Juvenile seen with adults 15/1/72. Display-courting activity noted January. Sander had only 2 records Dec, Mar.

OV? Uncommon. Most records from mainland around Ikeja, Surulere. A few records from Victoria Island. Two juveniles with adults 30/11/71 Iganmu. Sander found it sparsely distributed resident on mainland.

OV. Rare. One at Ikoyi Nov 1972-Feb 1973 - JRH et al.

PM. Not numerous but regular. NRR for Jun-Jul but Sander considered it as occasional visitor throughout year.

PM. Uncommon. One seen capturing a Ploceus nigerimus 9/3/69. NLS.

EM. Rare. 3 records - 2 Ikeja 3/2/70, 1 Tarkwa 1/11/70,
1 Lagos University 6/2/72. NLS.

FE. Rather uncommon. Most often observed in coastal strip or open areas such as Ojo Road but also attracted to recently cleared forest areas as near Isieri village.

PM. Regular but not numerous.

RE? Only one certain record - 3 birds Isieri 4/3/72 but several unidentified Francolin records Isieri probably this species - JPG. Sander referred only to Lagos records mentioned by Bannerman.

Haematopus ostralegus

CHARADRIIDAE

Vanellus albigularis

V. lugubris

V. senegallus

V. superciliosus

Pluvialis dominicus

P. squatarola

Charadrius hiaticula

C. dubius

C. pecuarius

C. forbesi

C. alexandrinus

C. marginatus

Nunenius phaeopus

BIRDS OF LAGOS

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- PM. Rare. Two records - Tarkwa 17/11/68 and 7/10/72. NLS.
- OV. Only observed at Isieri where 1-2 birds irregularly present. Sander found it common on Ogun sand banks above Isieri but only Nov-Apr. Possibly it is still regular north of Isieri and birds wander sporadically to our area.
- EMP? Very few recent records (mostly small flocks Victoria Island) but Sander found it frequent in flocks of up to 20 birds on coastal strip and Ikoyi.
- NRR. Sander had Apr record on grassland behind beach and Bannerman mentioned Aug-Sep records of Bourdillon.
- OV. One record - Tarkwa 24/1/71 - DIMW. NLS.
- PM in very small numbers. Although we did not obtain specimen we had very careful close views on ground and in flight (especially single birds 16/11/69 and 3/10/71). Birds were small, had grey axillaries, prominent golden speckling on winter plumage. We are very familiar with both species, are confident these birds were dominicus and strongly believe they were subspecies fulvus. NLS. Probable examples of this species observed by J.M.E. Took and J.H.E. Winter 1960-61 and 1962-63.
- PM. Common. Albinistic bird intermittently present Victoria Island Oct 1969-Mar 1970.
- PM. Common.
- PM. Common but generally less numerous than hiaticula.
- BE-RE. Nests during rains. On Victoria Island a nesting bird was seen to cover its eggs by kicking sand over them before running away from approaching observer; eggs were impossible to see until uncovered by observer.
- EM. DSV in small numbers which tend to concentrate on dry or burnt grass areas as at Victoria Island and Ojo Road.
- PM. Rare. Only 2 recent records Dec 1968 and Mar 1971 at Tarkwa - DIMW. Sander found it OV Sep-Nov.
- RE. Fairly common beaches and sandy open areas like Victoria Island. Sander found it missing Apr-Jun.
- PM. Common throughout year and abundant during rains of summer. During exceptionally wet summer of 1968 large flocks roosted Victoria Island Jun-Oct with peak of over 1000 Aug-Sep. Occasional reports of large flocks in winter in such areas as Tarkwa and Ijora. Sander reported large numbers only during dry season. One Lagos recovery of bird ringed in England.

BIRDS OF LAGOS

	S	+	-
C. temminckii			
C. alba			
Phalaropus pugnax			
Phalaropus fulicarius			
Himantopus himantopus			
Rostratula benghalensis			
GLAREOLIDAE			
Ploverianus aegyptius			
Cursorius temminckii			
Glareola pratincola			
G. nuchalis			
G. cinerea			
LARIDAE			
Stercorarius skua			
S. pomarinus			
S. parasiticus			
S. longicaudus			
Larus ridibundus			
L. genei			
L. sabini			

PM. Rare. Up to 10 present Ijora Nov-Dec 1970 - DIMW.
Sander reported specimen from Apapa 15/9/55.

PM. Common. Most numerous Lighthouse Beach.

PM. Uncommon. NLS.

PM (vagrant?). About 8 off west mole 30/3/73 (J.F. Brown) and 1 seen next day by JEB et al. NLS.

EM or PM. Common DSV. Occasionally in large concentrations as at Ijora 27/12/71 when over 100 present, being mostly immatures. Sander had only Dec records.

BR. RE or RSV. Chicks on Victoria Island Jun-Aug. Sander found it rare and had Mar records only.

EMP? Two recent records - 1 bird Lagos harbour Jul 1974 (S. Greenland) and 1 bird on new sandfill Ikoyi Jul-Oct 1975. Sander found it common breeding visitor Dec-Apr on Ogun from Igaun north, with one Apapa record.

EM. RSV to grassland such as Victoria Island. Not numerous - maximum was 21 in 1968 on Victoria Island. Sander found it scarce but had Jan-Feb records. No evidence of recent breeding but Sander reported chick in July.

EM (possibly PM?). Rare. Up to 8 on Victoria Island 1968 but most of the few records are of single birds. NLS.

EM. One recent record - 1 bird 5-6/9/70 - DIMW. Only Sander record was Sep-Oct 1949.

EM. Autumn visitor in flocks of up to 300 birds on new sandfill and similar situations as at Victoria Island and Apapa. Status similar according to Sander.

PM? Only record 10/1/71 Tarkwa - DIMW. NLS.

PM. 7 records Tarkwa - Ileshe, none in adult plumage - DIMW and G. Pettit. NLS.

PM. 5 records Tarkwa. NLS.

PM. One bird in immature plumage 2/12/67 - Tarkwa - DIMW and G. Pettit. NLS.

PM. 6 records involving 11 individuals 1967-70 Tarkwa - DIMW and G. Pettit. No adult birds. NLS.

PM? One sub-adult (probably first winter) Tarkwa 18/1/70 - DIMW. NLS.

PM. Uncommon. All records from Tarkwa area. NLS.

BIRDS OF LAGOS

PM. Present throughout the year by the hundreds and often by the thousands. In some years the numbers are reduced. PM and EM. Occurs throughout the year generally in small numbers. DIMW has identified races albifrons and guineae. BR-RE. Common in grasslands behind beach. Chicks Jan and Apr Victoria Island. Sander recorded it only Sep-Nov 1952. NNR. Sander found small colony in grasslands south of Isiere which habitat now destroyed. Recent unconfirmed sighting records Victoria Island. EM? Uncommon but increased each year from first record in 1968 to up to 15 birds feeding on Victoria Island in 1974. NLS.

RE. All recent records from Isieri. Not uncommon but shy. Easily overlooked unless familiar with call consisting of series of mournful coos (usually 4) with shorter note at the end. Also a peculiar note when alighting, like tearing of a piece of cloth. Sander had one record.

BR-RE. Abundant. Bannerman reported eggs in Feb. OV? First record 12/2/69 Victoria Island. Pair frequented bushes at water edge on north shore of island for over a year. Courting display noted Feb. During this period single birds and pairs occasionally seen Apapa and Ikoyi. OV. Rare. One Apapa Nov 1970 and one in Ikoyi garden Mar 1973. Sander had 2 records Ikoyi and Ebute Metta.

BR-RE. Abundant.

RE. Fairly common. Prefers scrub and swamp, including mangroves, and overgrown cultivation.

BR-RE. Abundant. Occupied nest 3/10/71 near Kuramo Waters well built for dove and lined with what looked like sheep's wool.

EM? Three 1970 records Iganmi, Tarkwa - DIMW. NLS.

NNR. Sander reported one record at Ajegunle. Bannerman mentioned one record near Isieri but no date.

BR-RE. Abundant but subject to local movements dependent upon ripening of wild fruits. Male collected Jan in breeding condition.

OV. Pair flying overhead twice Isieri Jan, Apr. Sander had a Jan record from Ogun area. Jul, Nov, Dec observations at Ikoyi and Victoria Island were undoubtedly of escapes.

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BIRDS OF LAGOS

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BIRDS OF LAGOS

MEPROPIIDAE

Merops apiaster

M. malimbicus

M. albicollis

M. pusillus

M. bullocki

M. eularis

CORACIIDAE

Coracias garrulus

C. naevia

Eurystomus glaucurus

E. eularis

UPUPIDAE

Урпурд ерордс

Phoenix culus purpureus

p. bollei

P. castaneiceps

BICEPRONIDAE

Tockus nasutus

T. camurus

T. fasciatus

Tropiocranus albocristatus

PM. One record - Tarkwa 1972 - JFH. NLS.

EM. Usually abundant but relatively scarce year of 1971. Non-breeding, but resident all the year except mid-Apr to mid-Jun. Status same during time of Sander.

TEM. Abundant DSV.

EM. BR? Recent records Jan-Jun only with apparent nesting attempt near Kuramo Waters May-Jun 1971. Sander found it common Oct to Apr with a few birds remaining to nest Jun.

Vagrant. One record - Tarkwa 31/1/70 - DIMW, NLS.

REE? Uncommon and local at Isleri. Most often recorded at "River" Adeyiran. Unrecorded elsewhere but Sander found it widely but sparsely distributed.

PM. Only recent record 2 birds Ikoyi 19/3/66 - Sharland and Skinner. Sander mentioned 2 Mar records and Bannerman mentioned undated skin from Lagos.

Vagrant, (EM). Once - 1 bird Apapa 4/10/70 - DIMW, NLS.

EM. Common DSV, often in good sized flocks.

EM? Uncommon Isleri - almost all records are of a few gularis mixed in with large invasions of glaucus. Most authors state this species is sedentary where it occurs, nevertheless it is apparently a migrant at Isleri.

Vagrant. One record - Igboere 30/10/73 - JBH and S. Greenland. Could not determine sub-species. NIS.

OV. Uncommon. Generally in more open country. Status same in Sander.

RE. Isleri only where uncommon. Probable nest in tall dead tree in Jun. Male collected in Mar in breeding condition. Sander found it very scarce.

NRR. Sander reported 2 records, Aug and Oct. Bates mentioned specimen from Lagos.

RE. and partial EM. Locally common resident between lagoon and sea and in savannah lands as at Ojo Road. Sander mentions nest found in Apr. Numbers augmented to some extent by migrants in dry season.

FE. Common Isieri. Occasional in other forest areas and forest patches.

BR-FE. Abundant. Found in all wooded areas.

FE. Common Isieri and elsewhere in forest and swamp-forest.

Andropadus curvirostris
A. gracilis
A. gracilirostris
A. virens
A. latirostris
Basopogon indicator
Ixonotus guttatus
Chlorocichla flavicollis
C. simplex
Theselocichla leucopleura
Phyllastrephus baumanni
P. albicularis
Bleda canicapilla
Criniger barbatus

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