



**West African Ornithological Society
Société d'Ornithologie de l'Ouest
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FIRST RECORDS OF NIGHT HERONS (NYCTICORAX NYCTICORAX)

ON THE ISLAND OF EL HIERRO, CANARY ISLANDS.

On 1 April 1986 a moribund juvenile Night Heron Nycticorax nycticorax was found at Playa de Tacoron (U.T.M. Grid Reference - 28RR0164) on the extreme south coast of the southernmost island Hierro, Canary Islands. The bird, which is now preserved in the collection of the Zoology Department of La Laguna University, gave the following biometric data: mass 600-700 g, bill 69.8 mm, wing 278 mm and tarsus 72.4 mm.

On the following day, a group of 15 individuals was seen at Montaña Los Humilladeros (1 284 m above sea level; U.T.M. 28RAR9571). Finally, on the third April, the corpse of an adult Night Heron was found at La Dehesa (725 m above sea level; U.T.M. 28RAR9370).

Night Herons have been observed on Tenerife (Bannerman 1963 Birds of the Atlantic Islands, Vol 1 Oliver & Boyd, Edinburgh & London.) and also on Lanzarote, Fuerteventura and La Palma (Emmerson pers. comm.). The species is presumably mainly a passage migrant, though it appears that in some years a few individuals stay to winter in the easternmost islands of the Canary Archipelago.

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THE BIRDS OF MOUNT NIMBA, LIBERIA. 1986

Peter R. Colston and Kai Curry-Lindahl

With a section on the biogeographic content by Malcolm Coe.

British Museum (Natural History) 129 pp £17.50

ISBN 0-565-00982-6

Mount Nimba is an isolated mountain range shoved between the countries of Ivory Coast, Guinea and Liberia. It is located in the forest zone, some 170 km from the sea and rises to over 1700 m. As such it is unusual in West Africa; only Mount Cameroon, Fernando Lo (P Bioka) and the Loma massif of Sierra Leone reach higher. It is - or was - mainly forest covered but some of the highest parts support apparently natural savanna grassland. Mount Nimba is of enormous biological importance with a very high level of endemism in both its flora and fauna.

In recognition of this the Guinean and Ivorian parts of Mt. Nimba have long been maintained as nature reserves. Not so the Liberian side unfortunately - the discovery in 1955 of high grade iron ore led to the rapid opening up of the area. The resulting new town, roads and the mining operations themselves have resulted in an all too familiar and depressing tale of deforestation and habitat degradation. One of the authors of the present book, K. Curry-Lindahl aware of the need for biological studies in Liberian Nimba before they were too late was instrumental in establishing the Nimba Research Laboratory which operated from 1963-1982. Part of the laboratory's research programme was an investigation of the avifauna of