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Société d'Ornithologie de l'Ouest  
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Wheatears in Winter Quarters

Reference has been made in a previous issue to a male Black-Eared Wheatear Oenanthe hispanica which returned to Kano the following winter and used the same territory .

This bird was first seen in January 1964 and was present daily until March 3rd 1964 . It reappeared in November 1964 and I ringed it on December 11th . It was present whenever I visited the Agricultural farm until February 17 th 1965 . In the autumn of 1965 it reappeared and was present until February 20th 1966 when it disappeared and has not been seen or recaptured since .

In the winter of 1964/65 its main perching post was a plough in the agricultural implement park . In the summer of 1965 the park was rearranged . In the winter of 1965/66 the Wheatear's main perching post was a trailer about 70 yards distant from the previous perching post . The bird was only recaptured once but the ring on its leg could be clearly seen .

Wheatears are very common round Kano but this was the only Black-Eared Wheatear I have seen within a radius of 50 miles of Kano . Presumably the same bird returned in the winter of 1967 and used the same tree as its base .

It appears that the territorial instinct in Wheatears in their winter-quarters is very strong .

R.E. Sharland

Reference : Sharland R.E. (1965) Bird ringing in Nigeria .  
Bull . Niger. Orn. Soc. 2 (5) : 2-5 .