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### **On the occurrence of the Black Stork *Ciconia nigra* in Nigeria**

Both Brown *et al.* (1982) and Dowsett & Forbes-Watson (1993) class the Black Stork *Ciconia nigra* as a scarce winterer in West Africa, a conclusion that remained valid even considering the rather large number of observations published by Walsh (1991). Recently, its status has been discussed further, mainly about whether it should formally be regarded as a vagrant or rare migrant (Salewski *et al.* 2000, Walsh 2002), rather than a regular winter visitor. In that context we add some observations of Black Storks made in northern Nigeria during the last decade, by Philip Hall and by people working on the Lake Chad Bird Migration Project and at the Leventis Ornithological Research Institute near Jos.

Elgood *et al.* (1994) give the status of Black Stork in Nigeria as an uncommon Palaearctic migrant recorded between November and April, from Lake Chad south to the Benue River in the east and the Kainji National Park in the west. The maximum number mentioned was 30, seen in the Hadeija wetlands east of Kano. Our observations are as follows: Dagona1 (2°45'N, 10°35'E), four, 22 Jan 1993; Doguntshugu, L. Chad (13°22'N, 13°30'E), one, 23 Feb 2002; Falgore GR (10°50'N, 8°40'E), six, 4 Dec 2002; W of Maiduguri (11°49'N, 13°09'E), 20, 22 Oct 2001; Vom (9°42'N, 8°45'E), one, 7 Dec 2001; Yankari NP (9°45'N, 10°30'E), 20, 21 Mar 1999; and multiple observations in Sambisa GR (11°40'N, 14°20'E): three, 20 Jan 1993; two, 20 Jan 1997; 35, 11 Nov 2000; five, 9 Nov 2001; four, 28 Jan 2002; three, 25 Feb 2002; five, 8 Nov 2002.

It thus seems that Yankari, from which there are several older records (Walsh 1991, Elgood *et al.* 1994), and Sambisa hold small regular wintering populations of Black Stork. Both are protected reserves with intact riverine gallery forest, which was suggested by Walsh (1991) to be the preferred habitat. Yankari lies within the

northern Guinea savanna, and Sambisa is a Guinea savanna outlier within the Sudan zone. This distribution roughly fits into the narrow latitudinal band (9°30'N–11°30'N), which Walsh (1991) regarded as the main wintering zone for the Black Stork in W Africa.

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### Franklin's Gull *Larus pipixcan* in The Gambia

In the late afternoon of 17 Jan 2002, at Bund Road, Banjul, The Gambia, my companions and I had good views from the raised road over the sea and mud-flats below. The tide was low, and Slender Billed Gulls *Larus genei*, Grey Headed Gulls *L. cirrocephalus*, Caspian Terns *Sterna caspia* and Royal Terns *S. maxima* were present on the mud. I noticed a different-looking gull, with white crescents above and below the eye, and a black half-hood. Direct comparison with the other gulls suggested Franklin's Gull *L. pipixcan*. The mantle was quite light compared with my memory of a Franklin's Gull seen twice in Holland, in February 2000, but my companions agreed on the determination. It was an adult in winter plumage, and the mantle seemed