



**West African Ornithological Society
Société d'Ornithologie de l'Ouest
Africain**



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FIRST OCCURRENCES OF THE CAPE WIGEON *Anas capensis* IN GHANA - The distribution and biology of the Cape Wigeon, a small dabbling duck found mainly in south and east Africa, have been reviewed recently by Winterbottom (1974, Ostrich 45: 110-132). His records from West Africa refer only to Lake Chad (where he describes it as very rare) and Angola as far north as Luanda. It has, however, been recorded in Nigeria west to Zaria (J.H.Elgood, pers. comm.).

On 11 December 1975 we observed (with P. Greig-Smith) a single Cape Wigeon at close range as it fed on a salt-pan at Weiija near Accra, Ghana. The pale plumage mottled and speckled with brown, together with the striking pink and black bill, put the identification beyond doubt. On 8 March 1976 M.A.M. saw another Cape Wigeon under similar circumstances on salt-pans at Iture, about 145 km west of Weiija, near Cape Coast. In general appearance it was the same as the Weiija bird and the characteristic bill and plumage were clearly seen. Neither bird was seen in flight. It appears that these observations are the first of this species in Ghana, and in the absence of confirmation of a record from Senegambia (Scott, quoted in Winterbottom 1974) are the most westerly records of the species. They fall some 1200 km outside the previously known range.

Although it is possible that both records referred to the same individual despite the distance and lapse of time, that seems improbable. Future visits to the numerous salt-pans and coastal lagoons (which are favoured habitats in the normal range - Winterbottom 1974) on the Ghanaian coast may reveal more accurately the present status of the Cape Wigeon in that area.

M.A.Macdonald and I.R.Taylor

COMMENTS ON "THE NORTHERN LIMITS OF FRINGING FOREST BIRDS..."

Sir ,

With reference to Fry's article in Bulletin 11(40): 56-64 (1975), whilst the 30 species listed may be virtually confined in the dry season to the 'dark tunnel' kumis, in March and early April there is no such exclusivity. In Kaduna I have records of Paradise Flycatchers, White-crowned Robin-Chats, Snowy-headed Robin-Chats and Wood Owls in gardens in late March and early April. This is not to say that they are not more common later : they are. As regards Pied Flycatchers, they are occasionally seen in the dry bush around Kaduna in the dry season. Mr R.E.Sharland and I watched one in late December 1965, and I have a Kaduna garden record for January 1966.

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DYE-MARKED KNOTS, SANDERLINGS AND CURLEW-SANDPIPERS

Large numbers were marked early this year in South Africa for a migration study. Will any-one seeing a dyed bird please note the colour and position of the dye and give full details to A.J.Prater, British Trust for Ornithology, Beech Grove, Tring, Herts, U.K. or to Dr R.W. Summers, Percy FitzPatrick Institute of African Ornithology, University of Cape Town, South Africa.