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### Unusual records from Cameroon

During February-March 1992 I observed in Cameroon the following species which have rarely been recorded there.

**Blittern *Botaurus stellaris*.** One watched feeding at the edge of tall reeds at the Ranch de Ngaoundaba (7°04'N, 14°00'E) on 25 Feb 1992, appears to be the second record for Cameroon, the first being at Bamenda Lake in December 1975 (Louette 1981).

**Curlew *Numenius arquata*.** Six seen at Zigague, near Waza National Park (11°25'N, 13°34'E) on 20 Feb 1992. Louette (1981) states that although the species is regular on the coast and has been recorded from Lake Chad there are no records from the Cameroon side of the lake.

**Dunlin *Calidris alpina*.** Two seen at Zigague on 20 Feb 1992. Louette (1981) considered the records of this species reported by Dragesco (1961) from Waza Park to be in error, due to confusion with other *Calidris* species. I suspect that Dragesco was correct in his identification (cf. Robertson 1992).

**Black-headed Gull *Larus ridibundus*.** Two seen at Zigague on 20 Feb 1992. Louette (1981) states that although the species has been recorded from Lake Chad there are no records from the Cameroon side. First observed in Cameroon by Swarth (1987) who considered that the birds he saw at Akonolinga (3°40'N, 12°15'E) had flown upriver from the coast. Elgood *et al.* (1966) suggested that a trans-Saharan crossing accounted for the gulls that reach Lake Chad, a theory that I would support for this record considering the improbability of Gulf of Guinea birds moving inland to tiny pools in Waza.

**Wattled Starling *Creatophora cinerea*.** First recorded in Cameroon in 1990 at Ranch de Ngaoundaba (Robertson 1992). In 1992 I found the species again, in greater numbers. In Waza National Park on 19-21 Feb I saw it daily, including a flock of 60. On 25-27 Feb I saw up to 25 birds at Ranch de Ngaoundaba. All birds were in non-breeding plumage.

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### **Horus Swift *Apus horus*, new to Cameroon**

On 27 February 1992 in Cameroon, I stopped by a colony of Red-throated Bee-eaters *Merops bullocki* which were breeding in a gully by the side of the road near the Ranch de Ngaoundaba, approximately 20 km south-east of Ngaoundéré (7°19'N, 13°55'E) on the Adamawa Plateau. One of my companions, C.-G. Cederlund, spotted some swifts circling overhead which he thought were Horus Swift *Apus horus*. I confirmed the identification and, realising that there were very few records of this species in West Africa, I paid particular attention to the birds. There were at least ten Horus Swifts flying above the bee-eater colony; they frequently flew low over the gully, affording excellent views of both upper- and undersides. The birds had conspicuous white rumps which wrapped around onto the flanks, much larger in extent than the rump-patch of White-rumped Swift *Apus caffer*. The tail was conspicuously forked, but lacked attenuated outer tail feathers, and there was a large white throat patch. I am familiar with this species in East and southern Africa.

In eastern and southern Africa the Horus Swift utilises nesting burrows of bee-eaters or sand-martins, particularly those of White-fronted Bee-eaters *Merops bullockoides*, the eastern counterpart of Red-throated Bee-eater. The swifts were not seen to enter any of the bee-eater burrows, which were occupied at the time, but the association with the bee-eater colony strongly suggests that the birds might breed at this site.

There are few documented records of this species in West Africa. Ash (1990) obtained the first breeding record for Nigeria at a site between the Mambilla Plateau and Serti, approximately 270 km west of the Adamawa Plateau. Fry *et al.* (1988) suggest that the species almost certainly occurs and breeds in north Cameroon/west Chad on the River Chari. Louette (1981) gives no records of the species for Cameroon. This would appear to be the first documented occurrence of the species in Cameroon.