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BIRDS OBSERVED NEAR LOME, TOGO IN 1976 AND 1977

by P. W. P. Browne

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I lived in Lomé, Togo (06°08'N, 01°13'E) from 19 January 1976 to 30 May 1977. During that period I made a total of 78.5 hours of bird observation, spread fairly evenly over the 17 months, in the Lomé Administrative Circonscription. The town is in the south-west corner of the Circonscription which extends about 20 km from north to south and 15 km from east to west, bounded on the south by the Gulf of Guinea and on the west by the Ghana border. Most of my bird-watching was carried out at three locations: an open plain with clumps of trees and bushes (liable to flooding in the rainy season) north-east of the town, a wooded swamp near the golf-course, and the beach near the port several km east of the town. I observed 154 species of bird in the Circonscription.

On each trip I counted the numbers of each species, and in the following list I have summed them to give a total of 'bird-days' for each species. For species with marked seasonal fluctuations in abundance, I also indicate the months during which they were observed. The nomenclature is that of Serle & Morel (1977).

Bird-days (in parenthesis :
inclusive months of occurrence
if markedly seasonal)

<i>Ixobrychus minutus</i>	6	<i>Crex egregia</i>	3
<i>I. sturmi</i>	7	<i>Limocorax flavirostra</i>	11
<i>Ardeola ralloides</i>	23	<i>Porphyrio alleni</i>	17
<i>A. ibis</i>	430		
<i>Butorides striatus</i>	7	<i>Actophilornis africana</i>	91
<i>Egretta gularis</i>	1		
<i>Ardea cinerea</i>	2		
<i>A. purpurea</i>	7	<i>Vanellus lugubris</i>	34
		<i>Pluvialis squatarola</i>	56(x-iv)
<i>Circus aeruginosus</i>	2	<i>Charadrius hiaticula</i>	110(i-v)
<i>Accipiter badius</i>	3	<i>C. dubius</i>	1
<i>A. erythropus</i>	1	<i>C. forbesi</i>	12(x-iv)
<i>Buteo auguralis</i>	1	<i>C. marginatus</i>	80
<i>Milvus migrans</i>	21(x-vi)	<i>Numenius phaeopus</i>	4(ix-iv)
<i>Elanus caeruleus</i>	22	<i>N. arquata</i>	1
		<i>Limosa lapponica</i>	4(vii)
<i>Falco subbuteo</i>	1	<i>Tringa nebularia</i>	36(viii-iv)
<i>F. ardosiaceus</i>	1	<i>T. glareola</i>	203(vii-iv)
		<i>T. hypoleucos</i>	49(vii-iv)
<i>Francolinus bicalcaratus</i>	9	<i>Arenaria interpres</i>	5(ii)

<i>Gallinago media</i>	2(iii-iv)	<i>Phoeniculus purpureus</i>	4
<i>G. gallinago</i>	7(x-iii)		
<i>Calidris canutus</i>	4(x-i)	<i>Tockus nasutus</i>	4
<i>C. minuta</i>	11(iii-iv)	<i>T. fasciatus</i>	1
<i>C. alba</i>	966(viii-iv)		
<i>Philomachus pugnax</i>	4(iii-iv)	<i>Lybius bidentatus</i>	3
<i>Himantopus himantopus</i>	1	<i>L. vieilloti</i>	8
<i>Rostratula benghalensis</i>	6	<i>Pogoniulus chrysoconus</i>	3
<i>Glareola pratincola</i>	6	<i>Campethera punctuligera</i>	7
<i>Larus fuscus</i>	9(ii-iv)	<i>Hirundo rustica</i>	137(ix-iv)
<i>Sterna maxima</i>	35	<i>H. semirufa</i>	13
<i>S. sandvicensis</i>	900(mainly i-iii)	<i>H. abyssinica</i>	9
<i>S. hirundo</i>	600(mainly ix, ii-iv)		
<i>S. balaenarum</i>	276(vii-x)	<i>Motacilla flava</i>	377(x-v)
<i>S. anaethetus</i>	3(v-viii)	<i>Anthus leucophrys</i>	6
<i>S. hybrida</i>	1	<i>A. cervinus</i>	30(i-iv)
<i>S. nigra</i>	2700(viii-v)	<i>Macronyx croceus</i>	44
		<i>Tchagra senegala</i>	48
<i>Streptopelia semitor</i>	3	<i>Laniarius ferrugineus</i>	1
<i>S. decipiens</i>	quata 1	<i>L. barbarus</i>	81
<i>S. vinacea</i>	29	<i>Malacoonotus sulfureopectus</i>	1
<i>S. senegalensis</i>	86	<i>M. blanchoti</i>	1
<i>Turtur afer</i>	11	<i>Corvinella corvina</i>	86
<i>T. abyssinicus</i>	12	<i>Lanius collaris</i>	73
<i>Treron australis</i>	27	<i>L. senator</i>	2(ii-iii)
<i>Psittacula krameri</i>	21(vii-i)	<i>Lamprotornis purpureus</i>	57
		<i>Cinnyricinclus leuco</i>	550(xi-iii)
<i>Crinifer piscator</i>	32	<i>gaster</i>	
		<i>Ptilostomus afer</i>	17
<i>Clamator glandarius</i>	1	<i>Corvus albus</i>	27
<i>C. levaillantii</i>	4		
<i>Chrysococcyx klaas</i>	1	<i>Campephaga phoenicea</i>	4
<i>C. caprius</i>	61(mainly ii-vi)		
<i>Centropus grillii</i>	4	<i>Pycnonotus barbatus</i>	172
<i>C. senegalensis</i>	39	<i>Chlorocichla simplex</i>	20
		<i>C. flavicollis</i>	1
<i>Caprimulgus climacurus</i>	1		
		<i>Saxicola rubetra</i>	27(x-iv)
<i>Apus affinis</i>	50	<i>Cossypha niveicapilla</i>	2
<i>Cypsiurus parvus</i>	500	<i>Luscinia megarhynchos</i>	3(ii-iii)
		<i>Turdus pelios</i>	22
<i>Ceryle rudis</i>	3		
<i>Alcedo cristata</i>	3	<i>Turdoides plebejus</i>	51
<i>Ceyx picta</i>	2	<i>T. reinwardii</i>	5
<i>Halcyon senegalensis</i>	12		
		<i>Acrocephalus arundinaceus</i>	1
<i>Merops malimbicus</i>	6(i-iv)	<i>Hippolais icterina</i>	2(xi,iii)
<i>M. albicollis</i>	300(xi-iv)	<i>H. polyglotta</i>	9(xi-iii)
		<i>Sylvia borin</i>	2(xi)
<i>Eurystomus glaucurus</i>	5	<i>Phylloscopus trochilus</i>	2(xi,i)

<i>Cisticola erythrops</i>	1	<i>P. cucullatus</i>	2800
<i>C. cantans</i>	1	<i>P. nigricollis</i>	6
<i>C. galactotes</i>	51	<i>Quelea erythrops</i>	1000 (vi-vii)
<i>C. brachyptera</i>	1	<i>Euplectes hordeaceus</i>	1
<i>C. juncidis</i>	33	<i>E. macrourus</i>	26
<i>Prinia erythroptera</i>	2	<i>E. orix</i>	179
<i>P. subflava</i>	13	<i>Passer griseus</i>	96
<i>Hypergerus atriceps</i>	1	<i>Vidua macroura</i>	123
<i>Camaroptera brachyura</i>	27	<i>Vidua sp. (Indigo Finch)</i>	5
<i>Remiz parvulus</i>	1	<i>Nigrita canicapilla</i>	3
<i>Anthreptes collaris</i>	7	<i>Estrilda melpoda</i>	21
<i>Nectarinia verticalis</i>	2	<i>E. troglodytes</i>	5
<i>N. venusta</i>	1	<i>Lagonosticta rufopicta</i>	40
<i>N. chloropygia</i>	2	<i>L. senegala</i>	50
<i>N. cuprea</i>	23	<i>L. rubricata</i>	4
<i>N. coccinigaster</i>	12	<i>Amandava subflava</i>	56
<i>Ploceus pelzelni</i>	11	<i>Ortygospiza atricollis</i>	3
<i>P. heuglini</i>	4	<i>Lonchura fringilloides</i>	8
		<i>L. cucullata</i>	330

DISCUSSION

Very little has been written on the birds of Togo; all known references are given at the end. I am not aware of any previous list of birds of the Lomé area except that of Douaud (1957) which is incomplete. In the town itself birds were scarce but in the surrounding countryside they were plentiful and varied, despite the high human population density. As on the Accra plain in neighbouring Ghana, the avifauna is essentially a savanna one, and savanna penetrates to the coast because of low rainfall. Savanna birds which might not be expected so far south include: *Streptopelia decipiens*, *Turtur abyssinicus* (black beak seen clearly on many occasions), *Psittacula krameri*, *Malaconotus sulfureopectus*, *M. blanchoti*, *Ptilostomus afer*, *Remiz parvulus* and *Lagonosticta senegala*.

Interesting sea birds were Damara Terns *Sterna balaenarum* and Bridled Terns *S. anaethetus*, both seen near the port. The Damara Terns occurred in a flock of up to 75 with Black Terns *S. nigra* and were a bit smaller than them. They were distinguished from Little Terns *S. albifrons* by having black beaks and their call was different, a sharp wit-wit. Little Terns were present about 35 km further east along the coast where they were probably breeding, and they had yellow beaks with black tips. The Damara Terns were in non-breeding plumage, with mainly white foreheads and crowns and black through the eye. This species has been recorded in Nigeria and Ghana (Wallace 1973). The three bird-day records of Bridled Terns refer to probably only one individual; it was in non-breeding plumage.

Several species which were observed near Lomé are not mentioned as occurring in Togo by Serle & Morel (1977). That must be ascribed to paucity of previous observation, for some of these birds are common. The species concerned are: *Egretta gularis* (another seen further east along the Togo coast), *Porphyrio alleni*, *Glareola pratincola* (flocks of 50 seen further east in Togo), *Turtur afer*, *Anthus leucophrys*, *A. cervinus* (up to eight together on a sandy area near the port; reddish throats seen), *Laniarius barbarus*, *Campephaga phoenicea*, *Cossypha niveicapilla*, *Turdoides reinwardii*, *Cisticola galactotes*, *C. juncidis*, *Prinia erythroptera* and *Estrilda troglodytes*.

RESUME

LES OISEAUX OBSERVES PRES DE LOME, TOGO PENDANT LES ANNEES 1976 ET 1977

154 espèces d'oiseaux ont été identifiées au cours de 78.5 heures d'observation dans la circonscription administrative de Lomé, Togo, en 1976 et 1977. Les oiseaux de savane y étaient largement représentés. Plusieurs espèces sont, à notre connaissance, nouvelles pour le Togo.

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