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Société d'Ornithologie de l'Ouest
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to the tree, and with a slight overhang or 'porch'. I was able to see inside the nest (on a visit two days later) by climbing the tree and pulling that part of the canopy towards me, and the lining of the nest differed in construction from the jacket. It was fibrous and whitish and probably consisted of kapok (Bombax). I was fairly sure that there were not more than two nestlings. Both parents were watched for a short time taking food to the nest and removing faecal pellets. Eggshells could not be found in the vicinity. No association with venomous insects was noticed.

In short, the breeding is apparently just like that of C. senegalensis, as would be expected. The date, however, is unusual. Although sunbirds have a fairly protracted breeding season, they are definitely wet-season breeders, and this is the only dry-season sunbird nesting record I have made - and the height of the dry season at that.

C.H.Fry

Sexual behaviour of the Hammerkop. At Waza National Park in Northern Cameroun, in February 1962, a group of 3 Hammerkops Scopus umbretta at a water-hole were observed 'reverse mounting'. One bird hopped on another's back, spread its wings and uttered shrill cries. After half a minute it hopped down. The bird which had been below then jumped onto the third bird's back and performed similarly. There is a photograph of this strange performance in *Memoires de l'Institut Francais d'Afrique Noire* No. 48 : Le Parc National du Niokolo-Koba; Dakar, 1956 (p. 88). Stowell (1954, A note on the behaviour of Scopus umbretta, *Ibis* 96 : 150-151) describes in some detail this behaviour, which he witnessed at Lake Victoria on three occasions.

H.H.Gray

White-throated Bee-eaters breeding in Nigeria. In view of the fact that the White-throated Bee-eater Aerops albicollis is such an abundant, widespread and conspicuous bird in winter in the southern half of this country and on passage throughout the country, it is remarkable that there is but little more than surmise as to its breeding in West Africa in the literature. Bannerman (1953) says that it "...breeds in...May to September in the arid northern belt...For a long time its breeding place was not discovered, but we now know that it repairs to the edge of the Sahara to rear its young, excavating holes in the sides of rain gullies well within the desert." Ward (pers. comm.) noted the presence of birds in the vicinity of Nguru in summer and thought there might be a breeding population. On 29th June 1965 on a journey from Maiduguri to Malam'fatori at the mouth of the River Yobe (and on the return journey on 11th July) pairs of White-throated Bee-eaters were much in evidence along the whole route except within 20 miles of Maiduguri, and these birds were almost certainly breeding. The North-Western route out of Maiduguri was taken, via Magumeri (12° 04' N., 12° 48' E.) to Damarsac, so if these birds were breeding, they were doing so well within the accepted area of Sudan Savannah as well as

in Sahel Savannah. On 28th June a small flock of White-throated Bee-eaters was seen on the River Ngadda 4 miles to the East of Maiduguri, and I am sure these were non-breeders.

Credit for the first Nigerian nest goes to Mrs J.Hopson who found one attended by adults in a garden on the South bank of the River Yobe - actually a near-stagnant stream or ditch at this time of year - at Yo about the end of June. During the subsequent fortnight, I found a further 15 or so nests in the area, mainly at Malam'fatori on Lake Chad, with some near the motor track between here and Damarsac. Breeding was in full swing, with some clutches on the point of hatching or in other cases up to six (the commonest number) moderately or well grown nestlings. Nests were extremely easy to find, since the country is very open and adults, especially when feeding nestlings, can be very easily watched to the nest. All nests were solitary, in flat or gently sloping sandy soil. An intensive study was made during the short time available and details of further findings will be published elsewhere. C.H.Fry

Grey-backed Fiscal Shrike in Nigeria. On 3rd July 1965 I found a pair (male and female) of Grey-backed Fiscal Shrikes Lanius excubitorius inhabiting scattered trees between quite open fallow fields and a swamp with tall grasses and dead-looking 20- and 40-ft. trees, a mile behind the shore of Lake Chad at Malam'fatori, North-East Bornu Province. Mr and Mrs A.J.Hopson and I saw the birds in exactly the same place again on 8th July. A moderately deep cup nest, 7 inches in diameter, constructed of small thorny twigs and some bents, and securely sited at 8 feet in a 10 ft. thorn shrub, reminded me of the nest of Lanius collurio and may well have belonged to the present species. The nest had been occupied this year, and both adult birds perched in the thorn bush. No 'larder' was found. Bannerman (1953) does not record it West of Lake Chad, but it is included in the Provisional Check-list of the birds of Nigeria (Elgood, 1964, Bull. N.O.S. 1 : 13-25. Gray informs me that he recorded this species, without taking any field notes, on the Mora - Waza road, Northern Cameroun, in February 1962. C.H.Fry

Guinea Wood-Hoopoe on the Jos Plateau. A Guinea Wood-Hoopoe Phoeniculus erythrophynchus which I recorded at Gindin, near Panyam, in 1959 is an addition to the provisional check-list of the birds of Plateau Province over 2,000 ft. (Ebbutt et al., 1964, Bull. N.O.S. 3 : 9-14), J.Lang

New records for Obudu Plateau. The following birds are not mentioned by Elgood (1965 : The Birds of the Obudu Plateau, Eastern Region of Nigeria; Nig. Field 30 : 60-69) but were recorded there by myself on two recent visits : Black Kite Milvus migrans (2 over grassland on 17th December, 1964); Leaf-Love Pyrhurus scandens (one on the forest edge, 18th December 1964); Scarlet-spectacled Wattle-eye Platysteira cyanea, White-crowned Cliff-Chat Thamnotaea coronata (on approach road at 4,200 ft.), and Pin-tailed Whydah Vidua macroura all in August 1965.

H.H.Gray