



**West African Ornithological Society
Société d'Ornithologie de l'Ouest
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Red Headed Lovebird *Agapornis pullaria*. I have frequently wondered at the source of the large number of Lovebirds that are exported periodically or sold locally. Whilst driving round Makurdi town I saw cages containing several hundred lovebirds suggesting that this Province is one of the sources.

White Breasted Cuokoo Shrike *Coracina pectoralis*. One seen near Yandev
14 August 1958.

Cabani's Bunting *Emberiza cabanisi*. A pair seen near Yandev on 15th August 1958

Compact Weaver *Pachyphantes pachyrhynchus*. A pair of Compact Weavers were found beside a small stream of Yandev Agricultural Department Farm.

R. E. Sharland.

(1) Gray, H.H. (1965) Some notes on the birds of Tivland. Bull. Nig. Orn. Soc. 7: 66-68.

(2) Fry, C.H. (1965) The birds of Zaria. III - Residents, vagrants and checklist (non-passerines). Bull. Nig. Orn. Soc. 7: 68-79.

Netting Hirundines by Flicking. One of the methods used in bird catching in both Britain and South Africa is known as 'flicking'.

It is a more active sport than most netting and can be used for Swallows, Martins and Swifts.

Select a site where your birds fly low (as they frequently do in Eastern Nigeria). Secure one end of the net to a pole or tree, fasten a short length of string to the upper ^{loop} of the other end of the net and tie the other end of the string on to a short pole which you hold in you hand much the same way as a fishing rod.

Let the net lie flat on the ground and as the birds fly over it raise the rod smartly.

Most of the Swallows caught at Cape Province in South Africa are caught by this method. I have found it works quite well in Kano but nearly all the Swallows here are the local non-migratory H.aethiopica.

R.E. Sharland.

Pygmy Goose Breeding in Nigeria I can find no records of the Pygmy Goose Nettapus auritus breeding in Nigeria though Sander (Nigerian Field XXI:153) records young birds near Lagos in June, and on 19th September 1961 I saw two adults accompanied by a pair of juveniles on a seasonal marsh near Kano.

On 15th August 1965, I stopped at a bridge near Birnin Kudu on the main Maiduguri Road. The river was high as a result of recent rains. A short way upstream there was a bare tree about 80ft high standing in deep water.

Four pairs of Pygmy Geese were sitting on the tree. Occasionally one of the birds would fly down to the river and return with food in its beak. If a male bird it would then pass it to a duck, who would hop along the branch to a hole and feed young birds inside. Ducks sometimes fetched food themselves but most of the 'fishing' seemed to be done by drakes.

It was impossible to scale the tree without a boat and ropes and it was very difficult to see into the holes but a bird's head was definitely seen at one hole. Pygmy Geese were seen to carry food to three separate holes.

Two of these holes were on side branches with only a gentle slope but one was on the main stem and practically vertical.

There was considerable competition with Grey Headed Sparrows Passer griseus and a Senegal Kingfisher Halcyon senegalensis which were probably also nesting in the tree.

R. E. Sharland

Grey Kestrel Eating Oil-palm nut fibre. Mr. H. G. Bass brought to my attention the presence of a Grey Kestrel Falco ardosiaceus* in a grove of Oil-palm Elaeis guineensis at the University of Ibadan on 6 July 1965. From then until the end of the month (last record on 31st July) a bird was consistently present in the same small area. Two were seen at dusk on 20th.

This falcon spent much of its time sitting in the crown of a palm and on 15th July I had a bird under continuous observation for twenty minutes while it fed on palm nut fibre. During this period it finished four fruits; each was extracted from the fruiting body with the beak, transferred to a foot and held down while small strips of fibre were torn off and swallowed; yet another instance of this lipid-rich fruit as a dietary component in otherwise specialised, non-frugivorous birds (vide Fry (1964) Bull. N.O.S. 3 16-17).

D. R. Wells

*Elgood & Sibley (Ibis 106: 1964) cite this species as a vagrant to the Ibadan area.

Occurrence of the Shining-Blue Kingfisher away from Water. A shining-blue Kingfisher Alcedo quadribrachys was captured alive in a classroom at Victory College, Ikare, Western Region, in August 1965, and released after being photographed in the hand. Identification was confirmed through photographs and description by C.H. Fry. The occurrence is interesting because like the congeneric Kingfisher of Europe A. atthis, the present species is amongst the most aquatic of the family, and the nearest stream to the classroom is about a quarter of a mile away. It is only 5-6 ft. wide, and nowhere very deep. The school compound is on a gentle slope in savanna country, surrounded by farms or farmed land reverting to bush. I believe one of these kingfishers was similarly taken a year ago.

pp. P. E. C. McCausland

Breeding of the Yellow-throated Long-claw. With reference to Lang's observations on the Long-claw Macronyx croceus (Bull. N.O.S. 6 (1965) : 44-46), the following may be of interest.

A pair was observed collecting nesting material near my house in Bida during the last week of May 1963. The nest was located on 3rd June and contained three eggs. All eggs hatched and the young were first seen on 14th June. About this time a change in calling was noticed to "weeee ti-ti-ti-ti". Later only one nestling remained with no trace of the others. A few days later the nest was deserted but the surviving nestling was found quite well a few yards from the nest in long grass and was obviously being tended by at least one parent bird. The nest was approximately 25 yards from the house.

R. J. Blackall