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BIRD NOTES CHIEFLY FROM THE NORTHERN FRONTIER DISTRICT OF KENYA.

PART I.

By W. Tomlinson.

STRUTHIONIDÆ.

Struthio camelus massaicus Neum. Masai Ostrich.
Serengeti Plains ; Athi Plains.

Struthio camelus molybdophanes Reich. Somali Ostrich.
Isiolo ; Garba Tula ; Benane ; Habbaswein ; Merille.

In September and October birds very scattered ; singly, pairs and small lots. An Ostrich chick was captured near Habbaswein in early October and was then about the size of a goose on very sturdy legs. Subsequently it thrived in captivity and when last seen was about four feet high. In November and December Ostriches were often seen in large flocks ; one such near Isiolo numbered nearly a hundred individuals.

PODICIPIDÆ.

Polioccephalus ruficollis capensis (Salvadori). African Little Grebe.
River near Meru, April 2nd.

ARDEIDÆ.

Ardea cinerea cinerea Linn. Grey Heron.
Siolo River, late November ; Benane.

Ardea melanocephala Vigors & Child. Black-headed Heron.
Isiolo ; Garba Tula ; Marsabit (crater lake).

Bubulcus ibis (Linn.). Cattle Egret.
Mombasa.

Nycticorax nycticorax nycticorax (Linn.). Night Heron.
Benane.

Ardeirallus sturmi (Wagler). African Dwarf Bittern.
Siolo River, March 23rd.

A bird was driven up from the river bed and perched in a thorn tree. When again disturbed it flew into the top of another thorn. Flight was rather weak and irregular. Was absolutely silent.

SCOPIDÆ.

Scopus umbretta bannermani C. Grant. Lesser Hammerkop.
Molo ; Benane ; Nanyuki.

Comparatively rare in the N.F.D., although fairly widespread along the Northern Uaso Nyiro and about Meru and Nanyuki. Many nests were found in trees over streams on the lower slopes of Mt. Kenya, in April. None were tenanted.

CICONIIDÆ.

Ciconia ciconia ciconia (Linn.). White Stork.
Isiolo, November 19th ; Merille, December 3rd ; Marsabit, December, 1940 ;
Meru, April 2nd ; Eastern slopes of Mt. Kenya, April 10th, 1941.

Immense numbers were seen at Isiolo in November. At Merille, a fortnight later, Storks were moving north and at Marsabit they were common in December ; but uncommon in February. Great numbers were seen on the eastern slopes of Mt. Kenya in April.

Leptoptilus crumeniferus (Lesson). Marabou.
Nairobi ; Nanyuki ; Benane ; Merille ; Marsabit ; Meru ; Angata Kaisut ; North
Horr ; Isiolo.

At North Horr in February, where vultures were conspicuous by their absence, the Marabou was fairly common. The largest concentration of the bird that I ever saw was south of Nairobi, when over 200 birds were seen in a small area resting on the ground and in nearby trees.

Ibis ibis (Linn.). Wood Ibis.
Kalacha, February 23rd.
Two birds were seen in a marsh following heavy rains.

ANATIDÆ.

Anas sparsa Eyton. African Black Duck.
Meru, common in April.

Alopochen aegyptiacus (Linn.). Egyptian Goose.
Kalacha, March 6th, in patches of swamp after rain.

SAGITTARIIDÆ.

Sagittarius serpentarius J. F. Miller. Secretary Bird.
Isiolo ; Benane ; Merille ; between Nanyuki and Meru.

AEGYPIIDÆ.

Gyps ruppellii erlangeri Salvadori. Abyssinian Griffon.
Isiolo ; Benane ; Merille ; Gamra ; Angata Kaisut ; Marsabit.

Some birds, like some people, sit back and have a good time during war, and the Vultures had a rare time of it during the East African campaign. I found all species of vultures common throughout the N.F.D. They concentrated around field butcheries, big military camps, etc., where there was plenty to eat. At Merille we killed a sheep and, having extracted what we required, bundled the offal into a metal incinerator hidden underneath a tall and particularly dense Acacia tree. The contents of the incinerator were fired with petrol and left to burn out. In the meantime the local Kites, Ravens and Cape Rooks had been watching our movements and, as soon as we left the incinerator, there was a general move by them to the

tree to see what was doing. In no time at all there were close on a hundred of them together. A few minutes later there were several Hooded Vultures and a single Egyptian Vulture on the scene, eyeing the smoke somewhat dismally from a nearby tree. A little later as I watched them, there was a series of rocket-like "whizzes" and a pair of Abyssinian Griffons came down at terrific speed, followed by several White-backed Griffons. Apparently they sensed that some mistake had been made for they cleared off almost immediately.

On another occasion, at Benane, where we had an isolated camp deep in the thorn bush, a hyaena was trapped and shot and the carcass was laid down under some thorn trees so as to be invisible from the air. Now, at Benane there were exceptionally few scavenger birds. Kites and Ravens were seldom seen. The first day no vultures appeared at all. The only birds that seemed interested in the kill at all, were a flock of Somali Helmet Shrikes. I inspected the carcass several times that day and always, as I approached, there were birds perched either on it or on the branches nearby. They seemed to be feeding off ants and other insects that abounded on the body. The Helmet Shrikes were extremely excitable uttering loud "chow-chow" calls and withdrawing as I approached, only to return as soon as my back was turned.

The second day, in the early morning, there was a flock of twelve Red-billed Ox-peckers on the scene, pecking about the torn flesh on the head where the bullet had emerged. The Helmet Shrikes still hung about on the surrounding trees and bushes; but did not, as far as I could tell, approach the carcass. In the early afternoon the first Vultures arrived, mainly Hooded Vultures and Abyssinian Griffons; but they appeared to be suspicious of a trap, for except for a few tentative snaps at the now stinking carcass, they left it severely alone, retiring to the tree-tops. So I had to bury the body. The interesting point, I think, is that here undoubtedly it was the Helmet Shrikes and the Ox-peckers that showed the Vultures where the carcass lay.

Vultures were practically absent from the Karoli Desert, particularly North Horr, where the principal scavenger was the Dwarf Raven. On the other hand, in the lava to the east around Gamra and the Huri Hills, Vultures were extraordinarily numerous, perhaps because the lava plains there were frequented by camel caravans, in which, judging by the number of dead camels that I saw, the mortality was high. By contrast, a dead camel in a very "high" state was found in the Karoli untouched and not a bird was in sight!

The Hooded Vulture was the most common species, with the Abyssinian Griffon, the White-backed Griffon, the White-headed Vulture, the Northern Lappet-eared Vulture and the Egyptian Vulture next in order of commonness.

Pseudogyps africanus (Salvadori). White-backed Griffon.
Isiolo; Benane; Habbaswein; Merille; Gamra; Marsabit; Laisamis.

Torgos tracheliotus nubicus (H. Smith). Northern Lappet-eared Vulture.
Isiolo; Siolo River; Benane; Merille; Gamra.

Trigonoceps occipitalis (Burchell). White-headed Vulture.
Siolo River; Benane; Merille; Marsabit; Gamra; Laisamis.

Neophron percnopterus percnopterus (Linn.). Egyptian Vulture.
Merille; Isiolo; Habbaswein.

The Egyptian Vulture was uncommon; but several haunted a *Manyatta* near our camp at Merille. They were so gorged that when chased they hopped and leapt amongst the low, hide huts, hardly attempting to rise.

Necrosyrtes monachus pileatus (Burchell).

Hooded Vulture.

Very common everywhere, occurring from the forests of Meru and the Jombeni Mountains to the lava plains of Gamra. Immense concentrations of this Vulture, with a few of the others and often many Marabou, used to occur in three most ghastly spots. One of these was on a burning hot, lava plain south of the Siolo River not far from its junction with the N. Uaso Nyiro : another was on a lava plain at Laisamis : the third on the lava escarpment near Gamra. On the hottest days, when the rocks were blazing with heat, hundreds of birds used to collect and listlessly lie about, the Marabou squatting on their hocks.

One Hooded Vulture was found so gorged on the road between Isiolo and Benane that it refused to move, so we jumped out of the car and lifted it out of the way by its primaries, plucking one or two for helmet decorations.

FALCONIDÆ.

Falco tinnunculus tinnunculus Linn.

European Kestrel.

Between November and March, European Kestrels were seen around Isiolo, Nanyuki and Siolo River. On March 21st, at Isiolo, a mass movement occurred. There was a long straggling wave of Kestrels about a mile wide and many miles deep. Unfortunately it was dusk and I could not say whether it was this species or not. Thousands of birds passed over, flying in an easterly direction.

Falco naumanni naumanni Fleisch.

Western Lesser Kestrel.

This bird was common near Merille in January ; a flock of about thirty individuals was seen at Laisamis at the end of that month. On April 8th, a large flock was seen at 7,000 ft. on the eastern slopes of Mt. Kenya, steadily moving northwards. Next day they had disappeared.

Poliohierax semitorquatus castanotus (Heuglin).

Abyssinian Pigmy Falcon.

Benane, a single bird seen December, 1940 ; another individual at Merille in January.

Milvus migrans parasitus (Daudin).

African Kite.

Generally distributed. At Kalacha and the surrounding lava country this race was common in February and March. By comparison, at North Horr it was rare.

Elanus cæruleus cæruleus (Desfont).

Black-shouldered Kite.

Nanyuki, April ; Thika, April ; Mombasa, May.

I did not see this bird in the thorn bush of the N.F.D.

Aquila rapax raptor A. E. Brehm.

Abyssinian Tawny Eagle.

Isiolo ; Merille.

One of a pair, shot on March 12th at Merille, was attacked by a Goshawk whilst perched on an exposed tree stump, the Eagle taking no notice save to snap at the Goshawk with its beak as it passed overhead.

Aquila wahlbergi Sundev.

Wahlberg's Eagle.

Merille.

Lophaëtus occipitalis (Daudin).

Long-crested Hawk-eagle.

Meru.

This bird was common at Meru, haunting river-valleys, presumably looking for the pretty striped rats that live there. One was seen perched on a dead tree eating a trout !

Terathopius ecaudatus (Daudin). Bateleur.

Isiolo ; Garba Tula ; Benane ; Habbaswein ; Merille ; Laisamis.

Well-distributed throughout most of the N.F.D. ; but none seen north of Marsabit.

Buteo buteo vulpinus (Gloger). Steppe Buzzard.

At about 4,000 ft. on Marsabit Mt. an adult bird was shot on March 16th with a .303. It was perched in the topmost branches of a tall forest tree by a stream.

Buteo rufofuscus augur Ruppell. Augur Buzzard.

Marsabit ; Meru ; Nanyuki.

Common in forested areas above 4,000 ft., haunting on Marsabit the lower fringes of the forest near the village. Call suggests Sea-eagle : appearance Bateleur. Said to have nested in Marsabit in February.

Astur tachiro sparsimfasciatus Reich. East African Goshawk.

Siolo River.

I was able to get close, and so identify, a bird resting in the branches of a tree on the banks of the Siolo River.

Melierax poliopterus Cabanis. East African Chanting Goshawk.

30 miles east of Marsabit ; Benane ; Merille ; North Horr.

Probably all seen were of this species. Goshawks were common at Merille in late December and January and must have caused havoc amongst the Weavers. One was seen in January with a fledgling drongo in its talons.

Melierax gaber (Daudin). Gaber Goshawk.

Benane ; Merille ; Marsabit ; Isiolo.

At Merille in January, several resident and roosting in trees in our camp, were seen with fledglings in their claws. This bird is crepuscular in its habits and, at Merille on moonlit nights, was seen fighting about long after sunset, whirling round and round very fast as if pursuing bats.

Gymnogenys typicus typicus (A. Smith). African Harrier Hawk.

Nanyuki. A single immature adult was seen in forest by a stream at 7,000 feet, perched on a low branch of a tree against the bole. On my throwing a bit of stone at it, the bird fell in fright through the branches almost into the water before it recovered and flighted away. The owl-like effect on a frontal view was most striking.

PHASIANIDÆ.

Francolinus sephæna grantii Hartlaub. Colonel Grant's Crested Francolin.

Merille ; one bird shot. Fairly common in dense cover by river-bed.

Francolinus africanus uluensis O. Grant. Kenya Grey-wing Francolin.

Siolo River, March 2nd, covey of four.

Pternistis leucoscepus infuscatus Cabanis. Kenya Yellow-throated Francolin.

Kinjanga (Jombeni Mts.) ; Siolo River ; Merille ; North Horr.

I was rather surprised to find these birds in fine condition at North Horr in February. They lived in a drying stream-bed in bush east of the oasis, and were shy and wild.

- Numida mitrata reichenowi* O. Grant. E. African Helmet Guinea-fowl.
Meru ; Isiolo.
A flock of 50 birds seen near Meru in May.
- Numida meleagris macroceras* Erlanger. Baringo Tufted Guinea-fowl.
Near Benane ; Meru.
- Acryllium vulturinum* (Hardwicke). Vulturine Guinea-fowl.
Benane ; North Horr.
Common at Benane in December. One female was shot in breeding condition at North Horr. Vast flocks occurred in February in dense thorn bush east of the oasis and gave fine sport with little risk to the birds which were very wild.

RALLIDÆ.

- Porzana pusilla obscura* Neum. African Spotted Crake.
Benane, November.
In swampy country at Benane. This bird led me a merry dance for a long time until I managed to find one under a bush at a range of a few feet, when I was able to identify it for certain. A great runner, and very shy, it is probably commoner than appears.

OTIDÆ.

- Choriotis kori struthiunculus* (Neum.). Northern Kori Bustard.
Isiolo ; west of Benane ; Matthews Range.
Many of these game birds, called by the South Africans "Peacocks," passed through my hands, having been shot by men on the road. I never killed one myself, although I once stalked one through scattered bush on the lower slopes of the Matthews Range. It ran so quickly, using every patch of cover, that I could never get near it. Flocks usually ran obliquely when pursued and, when forced to take to the air, flew 150 to 200 yards before stopping and running again. Alarm call is a snoring note audible about 100 yards away. Often found sheltering from the mid-day sun under thorn trees. Average weight of birds handled did not run to more than 20 lbs.

- Eupodotis canicollis somaliensis* (Erlanger). Somali White-bellied Florican.
Garba Tula. One, killed with a catapult west of Garba Tula, seemed reluctant to take to the wing, preferring to run.

- Lophotis gindiana gindiana* (Oustalet). Buff-crested Florican.
Benane ; Merille ; Angata Kaisut.
Common in bush-veld. One was shot at Merille in January. Seen displaying in evening at Benane, one shot up like a rocket to a height of about 5 feet, dropping like a stone, its wings closed. On being touched, the bird ran fast and finally flew up, dipping for cover. In the Kaisut, south of Marsabit, very noisy and active following heavy rain in March. Flight is very strong.

CHARADRIIDÆ.

- Charadrius hiaticula tundrae* (Lowe). Siberian Ringed Plover.
Benane, common in November.
- Charadrius dubius curonicus* Gmelin. Little Ringed Plover.
North Horr, a few by a desert pool in February.

Charadrius tricollaris tricollaris Vieillot. Three-banded Plover.
Benane, November ; North Horr, a few by a desert pool, February 18th, 1941.

Stephanibyx coronatus coronatus (Boddaert). Crowned Lapwing.
Isiolo ; Garba Tula ; Benane ; Habbaswein ; Merille ; Kalacha ; 20 miles north of Marsabit ; Thika.

Sometimes in pairs, as at Merille in December and January ; more often in scattered parties. Noisy on moonlit nights.

Stephanibyx melanopterus minor Zedlitz. Lesser Black-winged Plover.
A flock of about a dozen birds seen on plains near Nanyuki.

Hoplopterus spinosus (Linn.). Spur-Winged Plover.
North Horr ; Kalacha.
Haunted oasis pools at North Horr and Kalacha in February and March. Not shy and mainly in lots of 3 to 4 birds.

Sarciophorus tectus latifrons Reich. Smaller Blackhead Plover.
Isiolo ; Benane ; Merille ; Habbaswein.
In small lots in open country and in pairs at Merille in January. A common habit is for one bird to squat, whilst the other moves round and round in small circles calling vigorously.

Himantopus himantopus (Linn.). Stilt.
Benane, common in November, singly and in pairs by shallow river pools.

SCOLOPACIDÆ.

Calidris minuta (Leisler). Little Stilt.
North Horr, February 18th, 1941, flock of about 20 birds by a pool.

Actitis hypoleucos (Linn.). Common Sandpiper.
Archer's Post, December ; Benane, November ; North Horr, February ; Meru April 3rd, 1941.

Tringa ochropus Linn. Green Sandpiper.
Benane, November, rare and very wild.

Tringa nebularia (Gunnerus). Greenshank.
Benane, November.

Tringa glareola Linn. Wood Sandpiper.
Marsabit Crater Lake, February ; Meru, April 2nd, 1941.

GLAREOLIDÆ.

Rhinoptilus cinctus cinctus (Heuglin). Heuglin's Courser.
Isiolo ; Benane.

This bird was common at both Isiolo and Benane between November and March. It likes rocky country with fairly thick bush. At Benane one allowed me to approach to within a foot or so, and seemed dazed by the sunlight as I kept edging into the shade. When I circled the bird it pivoted round on its feet with quick jerks, always keeping broadside on to me. It is adept at keeping still and crouching amongst the rocks. The call is two-noted, rasping and plover-like.

BURHINIDÆ.

- Burhinus capensis maculosus* (Temminck). Senegal Dikkop.
 Isiolo ; Merille ; Benane.
 Common. A young fledgling was picked up by a dry stream at Merille in December.

LARIDÆ.

- Larus hemprichii* Bruch. Sooty Gull.
 Mombasa.

PTEROCLIDÆ.

- Pterocles exustus somalicus* Hartert. Somaliland Pin-tailed Sandgrouse.

Merille ; Isiolo ; Gamra ; North Horr.

February 16th-20th, at North Horr, I saw thousands of Sand-grouse fighting in from the desert to drink at a desert pool some way from the wells. The birds came in from the north-west at 9 a.m., flying at about 500 feet in closely-bunched but distinct flocks, calling loudly as they flew over. One morning I hid in a patch of scrub some way from the pool and watched as the birds arrived. They lost altitude gradually as they drew near, wheeled once over the pool and then dropped like stones to the shallow water, into which many birds waded. In five minutes there were thousands. They did not stay long ; but drank quickly and took wing, wheeling once again and flying away eastwards at about 400 feet. I recognized this Pin-tailed Grouse, which was the commonest one, and in smaller numbers the Pale Black-faced Sand-grouse.

Next night there was a rain-storm and the desert seemed to be a vast flood for miles around. Consequently the Sand-grouse did not arrive the next day to drink, nor did I see any more of these mass movements before I left North Horr a few days later.

The Pin-tailed was surprisingly common on the lava plateau above Gamra. At Merille flocks of thirty or so were often seen.

- Pterocles decoratus ellenbecki* Erlanger. Pale Black-faced Sand-grouse.
 Benane ; North Horr. Common in pairs at Benane in November.

- Pterocles lichtensteinii sukensis* Neumann. Suk Sand-grouse.
 Merille ; Marsabit.

Several of these birds were killed by me on the road through their habit of crouching in the dust and rising too late to get out of the way of the truck. At Merille in pairs. Common around Marsabit where numbers used to drink at a pool near the village at dusk.

COLUMBIDÆ.

- Columba guinea guinea* Linn. Speckled Pigeon.
 Merille ; Laisamis ; Meru.

Extremely common in doum palms by river bed at Merille and in fine condition. In pairs in late January and February. Launching itself from a high perch, the bird would beat its wings noisily once, then glide 25 yards or so, another beat, and so on until it reached its objective.

- Columba arquatrix arquatrix* Temminck and Knip. Olive Pigeon.
 Marsabit ; Meru

- Streptopelia semitorquata semitorquata* Rüppell. Red-eyed Dove.
Merille ; Meru ; Nanyuki ; Isiolo ; Thika.
Breeding at Merille in January. Widely distributed.
- Streptopelia decipiens perspicillata* (Fisch. and Reich.). Masai Mourning Dove.
Isiolo ; Benane ; Merille ; Habbaswein ; Kalacha ; North Horr.
Common throughout the arid thorn scrub, particularly around Benane and Merille. Breeding at Merille in January. A male tried to draw me from the nest by the plover trick of running along the ground, trailing a wing and limping. Finally a Sparrow-weaver, which had been watching, jumped on the Dove as it passed below and forced it from the ground. The call is curious, sometimes like a snarl rather than a chuckle. At North Horr this bird drank in some numbers at the oasis pool about 10 o'clock in the morning.
- Streptopelia capicola somalica* (Erlanger). South Somali Ring-necked Dove.
Isiolo ; Benane ; Merille ; Meru ; North Horr ; Kalacha ; Habbaswein.
Common in thorn-bush. Vast numbers used to drink at river pools at Benane, mostly in the morning. At Merille in January this bird was seen creeping about in pairs below dense bush.
- Stigmatopelia senegalensis aequatorialis* (Erlanger). Cape Laughing Dove.
Isiolo ; Benane ; Merille ; Marsabit ; Laisamis ; Meru.
- Oena capensis* (Linn.). Namaqua Dove.
Isiolo ; Benane ; Habbaswein ; Merille ; Kalacha ; North Horr.
Very common at Benane, drinking in the river there with *S. capicola*.
- Tympanistria tympanistria fraseri* Bonaparte. Tambourine Dove.
Siolo River ; Merille ; Marsabit ; Meru ; Nanyuki.
- Turtur chalcospilos chalcospilos* (Wagler). Emerald-spotted Wood-Dove.
Isiolo ; Merille ; Meru ; Marsabit ; Benane ; North Horr ; Habbaswein.
- Aplopelia larvata larvata* Temminck and Knip. Lemon Dove.
Marsabit ; Meru.

CUCULIDÆ.

- Cuculus solitarius* Stephens. Red-chested Cuckoo.
Numbers passed through Merille in late December when it was very noisy. Not seen or heard later.
- Clamator jacobinus jacobinus* (Boddært). Black-and-White Cuckoo.
Isiolo, November ; Benane, December 6th, 1940 ; Merille, February 2nd, 1941.
Common at Isiolo in November ; but then disappeared. The one or two seen at Benane in open, sparsely-treed country, were shy and difficult to approach. One seen mobbed by Weavers, also at Benane. A single immature bird seen in February in interesting circumstances. It was first with a party of Rufous Chatterers, individuals of which it constantly approached with beak agape and fluttering wings as through demanding food. The Chatterers always repulsed it with wing-flicks. Next day the party was seen again : this time the Chatterers gave the Cuckoo a bad time by diving into dense thorn thicket where it could not follow, so that it was reduced to perching on top to wait until they emerged. The immature bird had a whitish bill and feet and was only slightly glossed above, the throat being greyish.

- Chrysococcyx cupreus intermedius* Hartlaub. Emerald Cuckoo.
Meru, in lower forest in April.
- Lampromorpha caprius* Boddært. Didric Cuckoo.
Isiolo ; Benane ; Siolo River.
Widely distributed. At Dar-es-Salaam a fledgling cuckoo was observed being fed by several female Spot-backed Weavers.
- Lampromorpha klaasi* (Stephens). Klaas's Cuckoo.
Nanyuki, April ; not noticed in the N.F.D.
- Centropus monachus monachus* Rüppell. Blue-headed Coucal.
Archer's Post ; on reed beds along N. Uaso Nyiro ; Meru.
- Centropus superciliosus superciliosus* Hemp. & Ehrenb. White-browed Coucal.
Isiolo ; Thika ; Nairobi ; Mombasa ; Jombeni Mts. ; Meru ; Marsabit.
- Ceuthmochares aereus australis* Sharpe. South African Green Coucal.
A single bird was seen in a tree outside Mombasa on May 25th.

MUSOPHAGIDÆ.

- Turacus hartlaubi* (Fisch. and Reich.). Hartlaub's Lourie.
Nanyuki ; Mana (Jombeni Mts.).
- Corythaixoides leucogaster* (Rüppell). White-bellied Goaway Bird.
Isiolo ; Siolo River ; Benane ; Garba Tula ; Merille ; Habbaswein ; Laisamis.
The largest number of birds seen together was seen near Merille. One bird on the Siolo River imitated perfectly the bark of a dog.

PSITTACIDÆ.

- Poicephalus gulielmi massaicus* Fisch. & Reich. Masai Red-headed Parrot.
Nanyuki. Common in April, in small lots.
- Poicephalus rufiventris rufiventris* (Rüppell). Red-bellied Parrot.
Benane ; Merille. Uncommon at the former, very common in doum palms at the latter.

CORACIIDÆ.

- Coracias garrulus garrulus* Linn. European Roller.
Isiolo, November 15th ; Benane, November 20th ; Merille.
Great numbers seen, particularly at Benane, where the bush was full of them on their way south in late November.
- Coracias caudatus caudatus* Linn. Moselikatse's Roller.
Nanyuki ; Siolo River ; Merille.
I think that this race and the next *C. caudatus lorti*, occurred side by side at Merille.
- Coracias caudatus lorti* Shelley. Pink-throated Roller.
Angata Kaisut ; Merille.
There seemed to be a big influx of Rollers of this race to Merille in January and February. The call is particularly harsh. Another call, possibly from hen to cock, was a thin, high and very plaintive whistle and two seen later appeared to be mating.

Coracias nœvius nœvius Daudin. Rufous-crowned Roller.
Merille ; Benane.

Somewhat rare, a quieter bird than the rest. One seen performing aerobatics at Merille on December 30th.

Eurystomus afer suahelicus Neumann. East African Broad-billed Roller.

I have a doubtful record of three of these birds perched on a dead tree in the wilderness near Laisamis in late December. I know this race well from Zanzibar.

ALCEDINIDÆ.

Ceryle rudis rudis (Linn.). Pied Kingfisher.
Sixty miles north of Mombasa ; none seen along N. Uaso Nyiro River.

Megaceryle maxima maxima (Pallas). African Giant Kingfisher.
Meru, where common in the lower forests.

Corythornis cristata cristata (Pallas). Malachite Kingfisher.
Meru ; Merille, one bird at a water-hole in river-bed.

Ispidina picta picta (Boddært). Pigmy Kingfisher.
Meru, one bird seen by a stream in the lower forests.

Halcyon senegaloides A. Smith. Mangrove Kingfisher.
Mombasa.

Halcyon albiventris orientalis Peters. East African Brown-hooded Kingfisher.
Meru, in lower forests ; Mombasa.

Halcyon leucocephala leucocephala (P. L. S. Müller). Grey-headed Kingfisher.
Merille ; Siolo River ; Thika.

This Kingfisher, with its high chattering note,* was particularly common at Merille. One bird on the Siolo River was violently mobbed by great numbers of sunbirds.

Halcyon cheliculi cheliculi (Stanley). Striped Kingfisher.
Isiolo ; Mombasa ; Thika.
Fairly common round Isiolo ; but scarce deeper in the N.F.D.

MEROPIDÆ.

Merops apiaster Linn. European Bee-eater.
Isiolo, November 20th and March 21st. In each case the migrating flock consisted of about 50 individuals.

Merops superciliosus Linn. Madagascar Bee-eater.
Mana (Jombeni Mts.), April 6th, 1941 ; Mombasa, May.
A flock of a hundred birds seen at Mana, settled on trees for some time and then flew towards the Tana Valley. Common at Mombasa in May.

*The description of the note makes it sound like a subspecies of *H. senegalensis*.—Editor.

Merops nubicus nubicus Gmelin. Nubian Carmine Bee-eater.

Merille, a party of half-a-dozen or so hung about the trees by the river-bed in January. They foraged with a large flock of Wattled Starlings for a few days and then disappeared.

Aerops albicollis major Parrot. Eastern White-throated Bee-eater.

Isiolo, November; North Horr, February 23rd.

I was surprised to meet with this bird in dense bush country east of North Horr. Birds were numerous; but obviously on the move for they were gone next day.

Melittophagus pusillus cyanostictus (Cabanis). East Coast Little Bee-eater.

Isiolo; Merille; Meru; Mana (Jombeni Mts.); Siolo River.

Common in October at Isiolo; but disappeared afterwards. On the Siolo River on March 23rd, it was numerous and many immature birds were seen. The alarm call is short and metallic; but in March a liquid trill was heard persistently.

Melittophagus lafresnayii oreobates Sharpe. Elgon Cinnamon-chested Bee-eater.

Meru; Nanyuki; Jombeni Mts.

Common at altitudes of 5,000 feet and over, particularly at Meru and Jombeni Mts. in April.

Melittophagus revoilii (Oustalet). Somali Bee-eater.

Benane; Merille; Angata Kaisut; North Horr.

Widely distributed in arid bush. A charming bird. In pairs at Merille in January, otherwise in straggled parties up to about a dozen strong. Noisy in late January and February. Song loud and clear, a joyous trill in descending tones, something like "Twee-tee --- twee-tee --- twee-tee --- twee-tee," and quite distinct from other bee-eater songs. Occurs in deserts provided there is a patch of scrub for it to perch on, and several times seen in the Kaisut. Common and noisy at North Horr in February.

BUCEROTIDÆ.

Bycanistes cristatus (Rüppell). Silvery-cheeked Hornbill.

Meru, following heavy rain on April 9th, lots of five or six of these great birds were seen descending towards the lower forests, feeding en route.

Lophoceros erythrorhynchus erythrorhynchus (Temminck). Red-beaked Hornbill.

Isiolo; Benane; Merille; Wajir; Habbaswein.

Lophoceros flavirostris (Rüppell). Yellow-beaked Hornbill.

Benane; Garba Tula; Habbaswein; Merille; Laisamis.

Lophoceros deckeni (Cabanis). Von der Decken's Hornbill.

Isiolo; Garba Tula; Benane; Merille; Habbaswein.

These three species were common throughout the N.F.D.; but particularly so at Benane. The country there was ideal for them, dense thorn-bush, rocks, intense heat, they seemed to thrive on it and were extremely noisy.

Lophoceros melanoleucus geloensis Neumann. Gelo River Crowned Hornbill.

Definitely seen at Meru many times and I think also seen at Benane in park-like country by the river there, although the birds I saw may have been strays from the Tana Valley.

UPUPIDÆ.

Upupa epops somaliensis Salvin.

Somali Hoopoe.

Merille ; Laisamis .

Common at Merille and surrounding districts between December and February in open, well-treed, acacia country.

Upupa africana Beckstein.

South African Hoopoe.

Isiolo ; Benane ; Merille.

Individuals frequently seen. A flock of about twenty birds seen near Merille in late January.

PHÆNICULIDÆ.

Phœniculus purpureus marwitzi (Reichenow).

East African Kakelaar.

Mombasa, in pairs and I think breeding in May.

Phœniculus damarensis granti (Neumann).

Ukamba Kakelaar.

Isiolo ; Merille ; Laisamis ; Habbaswein ; Benane.

Seen singly and in parties of four to eight. Very common in doum palm country around Merille. Immature birds with shorter tails than their parents seen at Merille in January. Their beaks also were hardly curved, short and of a dull leaden colour, and their plumage lacked gloss.

Rhinopomastus cyanomelas schalowi Neumann.

East African Scimitar-bill.

Merille, seen only twice, on both occasions in pairs. It has a chattering call similar to the Kakelaar's.

Rhinopomastus minor cabanisi (Defilippi).

Cabanis' Scimitar-bill.

Isiolo ; Merille ; Laisamis.

Locally common in acacia country, in which trees it likes to search for insects like a tit, hanging in all sorts of positions. At Isiolo it was common in November in pairs. At Merille it was nesting in December and January, one site found being a narrow cleft in the bole of an acacia about fifteen feet from the ground. Obviously there were nestlings inside, this was early January, for the parent birds were busy taking up insects. The following records refer to this nest :—

January 14th.—Two fledglings with parents, the young birds perched close together on a branch uttering constant thin little piping hunger-calls that rose to a crescendo whenever the parents approached. Their bills were straight, very short and dusky in colour. Plumage had practically no gloss, being deep dusky with some white on the tail feathers and some white streaking on the abdomen and belly. Both young birds essayed flight ; but one was weak and they seemed to experience trouble when alighting, wobbling about and having to use their wings to maintain their balance. Tails were naturally shorter than those of their parents and the graduated form was not at all clear.

January 15th.—One of the young was taken by a Goshawk. Parents uttered loud calls of distress for some time ; but soon forgot and were feeding the other youngster.

January 20th.—Immature bird more confident ; but still being fed by its parents and making no attempt to feed itself. Bill a little paler dusky, a little longer ; but with only a very slight curve. It looks very brittle and fragile and needle-pointed. Tail about normal in length.

January 26th.—Bill slightly longer, with increased curve, pale pink towards the tip and dusky flesh at the base ; but still with same needle-pointed, brittle appearance. Tail showing graduations and all white disappeared. . . Definite signs of gloss showing. Very voracious and still being fed by its parents.

January 31st.—Young bird feeding itself tentatively ; but using its bill very awkwardly. Once I noticed it peck something out of a crevice and then cock up its head in an attempt to swallow it by sliding it down the gape ; but the something, after a few futile snaps, dropped out.

February 7th.—In plumage almost identical with parents ; bill quite pinkish, still quite brittle-looking, but length and curve apparently as that of parents. Attempting to feed itself ; but still accepting food from parent birds.

The shape of the bill in this bird would seem to be designed for picking up insects inside holes and crevices in trees. Many times at Merille, I watched birds insert their heads and necks in a hole and peck at something inside. The call of this race is very attractive, a low, musical, trilled note uttered both on the wing and when scrambling about in trees.

TYTONIDÆ.

Tyto alba affinis (Blyth).
Mombasa.

African Barn-Owl.

STRIGIDÆ.

Glaucidium perlatum (Vieillot).

Pearl-spotted Owl.

Isiolo ; Merille.

Particularly common and noisy at Merille, its loud whistling notes being heard day and night. I saw a curious little owl that must have been this, possibly immature, in the daytime. At first the bird, perched on a dead tree, seemed to have its head towards me. Suddenly as I watched it through the binoculars at close range, it turned its head and presented its real face to me. It was truly astonishing how the markings on the rear crown and nape so closely correspond to its true facial aspect. The whitish eyebrows were there, also dark spots below for the wide, irised eyes, and a strip of white feathers between representing a perfect beak. I noticed in this particular bird a habit of shivering its tail in a sideways motion when resting. Often seen mobbed, particularly by Bulbuls and Weavers.

Bubo africanus cimerascens Guér.-Mén.

Abyssinian Spotted Eagle-Owl.

North Horr, February 22nd, 1941.

A single bird seen perched low in a tree by a sluggish stream east of the oasis of North Horr, after being flushed from dense bush. It appeared completely dazed by the brilliant sun and was promptly mobbed by Dwarf Ravens.

Bubo lacteus (Temminck).

Verreaux's Eagle-Owl.

Isiolo ; Merille.

A pair of these great birds haunted our camp at Isiolo, with their headquarters in some tall acacias. As I slept in the open, they often woke me at night with their deep calls and fleeting shadows under the moon. At Merille I saw this species many times in tall riverside timber : it was never difficult to approach.

CAPRIMULGIDÆ.

Caprimulgus rufigena frenatus Salv.

Kenya Rufous-cheeked Nightjar.

Isiolo.

Many Nightjars were seen in Kenya, but few classified. One of this species was killed through dashing into my truck at night.

Caprimulgus donaldsoni Sharpe.

Donaldson-Smith's Nightjar.

Isiolo. A single bird was seen on a plain near Isiolo on March 22nd. Its beautiful plumage made it difficult to pick out amongst the rocks. Once it alighted, it immediately crouched and became invisible. Only after a long and difficult stalk could I get a clear view of it.

Caprimulgus fossii apatelius Neum.

Abyssinian Mozambique Nightjar.

North Horr, February ; Mombasa.

MICROPIDÆ.

Micropus apus shelleyi (Salvadori).

Abyssinian Swift.

Kikuyu.

Micropus æquatorialis æquatorialis (J. W. von Müller).

Mottled Swift.

Archer's Post ; Isiolo.

Micropus affinis abessynicus (Streub.).

Little African Swift.

Mombasa ; N. Uaso Nyiro near Archer's Post.

Micropus caffer streubelii (Hartlaub).

Abyssinian White-rumped Swift.

Meru ; Mombasa. Nesting on a rock face overlooking a stream at Meru in early April.*

Cypsiurus parvus myochrous Reich.

East African Palm Swift.

Archer's Post ; Benane ; Isiolo ; Merille.

COLIIDÆ.

Colius striatus kikuyuensis van Someren.

Kikuyu Speckled Mousebird.

Isiolo ; Siolo River ; Nanyuki ; Merille ; Marsabit ; Meru.
Nesting at Meru in April.

Colius striatus mombassicus van Someren.

Mombasa Speckled Mousebird.

Mombasa.

Colius leucocephalus turneri van Someren.

North Uaso White-headed Mousebird.

Isiolo ; Benane ; Merille ; Laisamis.

Common in flocks throughout the thornscrub of the N.F.D. Call note is a musical although plaintive whistle.

Colius macrourus pulcher Neum.

East African Blue-naped Mousebird.

Isiolo ; Merille ; North Horr ; Laisamis.

I found this less shy than *C. leucocephalus turneri*. From November through to March it was in flocks. Call, a rough, rather mournful, whistle frequently uttered both whilst on the wing and at rest.

TROGONIDÆ.

Apaloderma narina narina (Stephens).

Narina Trogon.

Meru, April 10th, 1941, seen in lower forest.

*No doubt in a swallow's nest.—*Editor.*

CAPITONIDÆ.

Lybius melanopterus (Peters).

Brown-breasted Barbet.

Isiolo ; Siolo River ; Benane ; Merille ; Laisamis ; North Horr.

Common throughout N.F.D. The North Horr birds were conspicuously streaked above with greenish-yellow. A pair was seen *in cop.* at Merille in January. Call note very loud, an explosive "querr--querr." Seen singly, but often in parties. Seems to prefer rather stunted trees to giant acacias. In January at Merille, one evening at sunset, I was walking through the bush when I heard this bird calling loudly from above my head. At first I failed to see it, then suddenly I saw its head protruding from an untenanted roosting nest of a Black-billed Sparrow-weaver. I waited some time until the sun was practically down ; but the bird was still there. Eventually I scared it off with a near miss from a stone, and sure enough it was a bird of this species. Whether it was using the old nest as a roosting-spot, or possibly even as a nesting-site, I cannot say : the first conjecture is more probable.

Tricholaema diadematum diadematum (Heuglin).

Red-fronted Barbet.

Nanyuki ; Siolo River ; Isiolo.

On March 23rd, this bird was common in well-treed country by the Siolo River. A nest-hole was found 10 feet up the bole of an acacia. There were nestlings inside ; but I could not reach the nest. The call seems similar to that of the Brown-throated Barbet. Probably wanders about during the year, for none were seen round Isiolo until March when they suddenly became common. On the 29th of the month they were seen in parties, including many young birds. Seen at 6,000 feet near Nanyuki in April in open country dotted with low bush.

Buccanodon leucotis kilimensis (Shelley).

Kilimanjaro White-eared Barbet.

Meru, April 7th, 1941. A party of four birds, seen at about 5,000 feet, in forest trees by a stream at Meru, hunting vigorously but silently amongst the top-most branches, twisting and turning about like tits.

Pogoniulus pusillus affinis (Reich.).

East African Red-pollled Tinker Bird.

Meru ; Isiolo.

Trachyphonus erythrocephalus versicolor Hartlaub.

North Kenya Red and Yellow Barbet.

Isiolo ; North Horr.

Seen many times in the thorn bush, particularly about Isiolo. A fine male was seen perched in a tree at North Horr in February.

Trachyphonus darnaudii boehmi Fisch. & Reich.

Black-capped Ground Barbet.

Isiolo ; Laisamis ; Merille.

A stolid bird, and at Merille much given to creeping in and out through and below bushes. Common at Laisamis in rocky valleys choked with thornscrub.

INDICATORIDÆ.

Indicator indicator (Sparrman).

Black-throated Honey-Guide.

Siolo River ; Meru ; Thika.

Became suddenly common on the Siolo River on March 23rd, their appearance coinciding with a mass invasion of sunbirds. Immature birds were also numerous that day. In April at Meru a bird was seen hovering round a native honey-pot.

Indicator variegatus variegatus Lesson.

Scaley-throated Honey-Guide.

Siolo River. One individual was with the Black-throated Honey-Guides on March 23rd.

PICIDÆ.

Campethera nubica nubica (Boddaert).

Nubian Woodpecker.

Isiolo ; Merille ; Siolo River ; Nanyuki.

Very common at Isiolo and along the riverbeds of Merille. Frequents low bush as well as trees and perches, often for long periods, like an ordinary bird. A young bird, being fed by parents on the Siolo River at the end of March, uttered a curious imitation of their call, a prolonged sound like the squeaking of rusty hinges on a swinging gate.

Dendropicus fuscescens hemprichii (Ehrenberg).

Abyssinian Cardinal Woodpecker.

Isiolo ; Benane ; Habbaswein ; Merille ; Laisamis ; Marsabit ; North Horr.

Very common and has a wide range.

Thripas namaquus schoensis (Rüppell).

Abyssinian Bearded Woodpecker.

Isiolo ; Benane ; Habbaswein ; Merille ; Laisamis ; North Horr.

Extremely common at Merille. Several birds seen there very dark above and below, possibly referable to *Thripas namaquus turkanæ*.

Mesopicos goertæ rhodeogaster Fisch. & Reich.

Kenya Grey Woodpecker.

Nanyuki at 6,500 ft., a single bird.

(To be continued).