

PITTA ANGOLENSIS LONGIPENNIS (Reichenow)

BY V. G. L. VAN SOMEREN

I wish in this short note to draw attention to this interesting and somewhat rare bird, in the hope that some member may be able to obtain specimens and forward them to the Museum.

The true home of the Pittas is the Malay Archipelago, including the Islands of Borneo, New Guinea, and Sumatra, while certain other species have been found in India and Australia.

Considerable interest was aroused when an example of a true Pitta was discovered in West Africa (Angola) in 1816, and named *Pitta angolensis*.

Later on, a second species was discovered in Central Congo, and although referred to *P. angolensis* was afterwards proved to be a distinct species and called *P. Reichenowi*.

In 1899, Alexander procured specimens of a Pitta, which he referred to *P. angolensis*, from the Nyassaland district and Zambezi; but Reichenow, in working over this group, showed that the Eastern birds belonged to a distinct sub-species, and named them *P. angolensis longipennis*.

Apparently no other specimens of this Eastern form were collected until my collectors procured a single example in the great Mabira Forest of Uganda, and another specimen was captured in the Grand Hotel in Nairobi in 1912! This later specimen flew into the hotel one evening, and was caught; unfortunately the skin was by some mistake sent to the British Museum.

These birds are no doubt more plentiful than supposed; but, owing to the fact that they inhabit the thick dense forests, they are easily overlooked. Netting them would no doubt give better results than shooting—as was proved to be the case in New Guinea.

They lead, more or less, a terrestrial life: feeding on the insects which they obtain from amongst the fallen leaves.

So far as my information goes, the nest of this Eastern form has not been found ; but that of other species is described as being a domed structure, placed on the ground, and constructed of roots, leaves, and twigs, and lined with fine rootlets and grass. The eggs are white speckled with purplish grey.

A characteristic feature of these birds is their long tarsi which enable them to hop and run with great rapidity.

These birds, though conspicuously coloured, are difficult to see in the gloom of the great forests.

THE LUMBWA AND ELGON CAVES, WITH SOME
REMARKS ON THEIR ORIGIN AND THE
GEOLOGY OF THE REGION

By C. W. HOBLEY

In the Lumbwa highlands there are to be found an extensive series of caves, the occurrence of which has been the subject of considerable discussion, and it is only of late that systematic examination has been possible. It is now proposed to record the information available up to date. The existence of these caves was first brought to my notice by my friend the late H. B. Partington about eleven years ago. He was then the Commissioner of Lumbwa District. He informed me of the existence of certain caves called 'Kipchebos' on the Kiptiget River, and stated that at this place there was an extensive chain of caves which, according to the natives, ran due south for a long distance, and even extended under the bed of the Sondu River. He recorded the fact that the natives excavated a kind of salt earth from these places, but pronounced no opinion as to their actual origin.

During the last year these caves have formed the subject of investigation by Mr. Dobbs and Mr. Knight-Bruce, and some notes by the latter are given below, with a map of the area and a plan and section of one of the caves.