

THE BIRDS OF KENYA AND UGANDA.

PART II. VOL. 2.

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FAMILY *GLAREOLIDÆ* (COURSEERS AND PRATINCOLES).

INTRODUCTION.

The Courseers of Kenya and Uganda are represented by species belonging to four genera, *Cursorius*, *Rhinoptilus*, *Glareola* and *Galachrysis*. Birds belonging to the first two genera are noted for their long legs and long de-curved bills; those of the genus *Rhinoptilus* have proportionately long legs, but the bills are considerably shorter and relatively broader at the base; representatives of the last two genera are noted for the shortness of the legs, short bills and forked tails, giving them a superficial resemblance to swallows when they fly.

Representatives of the first two genera are found in open veldt country or rocky plateau, whereas the latter two are usually found in the vicinity of water. Most of these birds are plover-like in appearance and habits. They all nest on the open ground in pebbly or rocky situations.

SUB-FAMILY *CURSORINÆ*.

GENUS *CURSORIUS*.

CURSORIUS CURSOR LITTORALIS, Erl. COASTAL BLUE-NAPED COURSER.

Ref.: Erlanger, Jrl. f. Ornith., 1905, p. 58.

Type locality: Kismayu.

DISTRIBUTION:

The coastal belt of Kenya, from the Tana to Jubaland and inland to south of the Lorian Swamp.

DESCRIPTION: MALE AND FEMALE.

Very similar to the race *somalensis*, but distinguished by its darker more greyish upperside, otherwise the plumages are alike.

HABITS:

These will be discussed with the next race.

CURSURIUS CURSOR SOMALENSIS, Shelley. SOMALI BLUE-NAPED COURSER.

Ref. : Shelley, Ibis, 1885, p. 415.

Type locality : Somaliland.

DISTRIBUTION :

The northern frontier of Kenya, to east and west of Lake Rudolf. Intermediates south of the Northern Guasso Nyiro approaching the race *littoralis*.

DESCRIPTION : Male and female adult.

Forehead and crown to just about the posterior angle of the eye cinnamon, shading to blue-grey on the hinder-crown; nape patch black in the form of a triangle; lores and supercillium cream paling to white above the earcoverts, and carried back as a V mark surrounding the black nape triangle; from the posterior angle of the eye is a black line which borders the white V and meets on the hind neck. Cheeks and ear-coverts isabelline, shaded with sandy on the distal ear-coverts; lower hind-neck sandy-isabelline; chin and throat creamy shading to pale isabelline on the breast; the rest of the underside including the tail-coverts creamy white. Mantle, rump, scapulars and the wing-coverts sandy-isabelline; upper tail-coverts similarly coloured, washed with rufescent; secondaries greyish-buff on the outer-webs white on the inner, with whitish margin with a greyish streak on the tips; primaries black with slight white tips to inner ones; under-wing-coverts and axillaries buffy-grey to isabelline. Tail, central ones grey-isabelline gradually paling to whitish on the outer ones, all with a black sub-terminal bar and white tips.

Bill, black to brownish at base; eyes brown; legs and feet creamy-white to ivory. Wings, 125-135 mm.

IMMATURE :

General plumage somewhat like the adults but no blue on the nape and hind-crown; the upper surface ground colour darker and with narrow wavy bars and rusty tips. The white lines on the back of the head not marked, only indicated.

JUVENILE :

The downy plumage is mottled, sandy, greyish and white, with whitish underside.

HABITS :

The Blue-naped Coursers of Kenya and Uganda are limited in their distribution to semi-arid open plains and bush country below 4000 ft. The two races are about equally distributed but it is not yet known



Somali Blue-naped Courser (*Cursorius cursor somalensis*, Shelley).

exactly where the two forms meet, the country they inhabit being little traversed. During the non-breeding season, one may find them in small flocks up to a dozen birds, but as the nesting season approaches they split up into pairs, over a wide area.

They are rather wary and do not allow one to approach very near on foot, but if one is in a car and progress towards them is rapid, they will remain stationary, either in a semi-crouching position or bolt upright, with head held vertically. As one moves away from them they will gradually relax and with stealthy walk will take up positions behind some convenient bush or rock, but always watchful. When in flight, the contrast in the plumage is strongly emphasised; the black flight-feathers and pale body plumage is very evident. They are capable of a remarkable turn of speed when running, and this method of progress is preferred to flight unless they are greatly disturbed. When they have nests or young one may approach the adults very much more easily to within quite a short distance but they always maintain just that distance which they consider safe, walking slowly away from one as one tries to get nearer. Should they be nesting, the retreat is always away from the nest or young. The flight is swift though irregular, and is a series of rapid wing-beats and gliding just before landing, and as they touch the ground they run for some distance. As they land on the ground they seem to disappear, so closely does their plumage harmonise with the ground. They feed entirely on insects which they find on the surface or under small stones. They are often found in places where game have been resting, and in among the droppings of these animals, they obtain quantities of fly larvæ and small beetles.

The nesting season is not well known, but breeding birds and eggs have been noted in April-May and November, while young in the speckled plumage have been seen in July. The nest, if such it may be called, is merely a slight depression with no material added or sometimes just a few pebbles and bits of grass. The eggs, two in number, are putty to cream in ground colour with streaks and scrawls and fine lines of dark brown over the entire surface and subcutaneous shades of grey and lilac. Average size 32×26 mm. Their colour is very cryptic, especially so when laid on the bare ground. The nestling in down has already been described. They are extremely active practically from the time of hatching, and their powers of running are remarkable. When very young, they adopt the "flattening" method of concealing themselves at the first note of warning from their parents; they drop down into some slight depression, or possibly just where they were standing and they vanish completely, so closely does their colour blend with the surroundings. Not only is this the case with the young, it is evident in the juvenile plumage, and equally so when the bird is adult. If one takes the trouble to look at the colouration of the sandy desert which is their habitat, one will find just those colours which are present in the

old birds; blue, grey, brown, buff pebbles, bits of bleached twig and grass strewn about the sandy surface, all making for harmony.

If it were not that the birds moved, and kept up their soft plaintive call of two notes oft repeated, one would not know of their presence. As they feed they jerk their bodies into an upright position every now and then, and taking a few rapid steps first to right, then left, they hardly ever miss an insect as they hunt in bands over some favourite feeding ground. They appear to adopt a definite system and formation in "working" an area.

When a rain-storm is working up, these birds get restless; they take little running flights and lift their wings vertically over their bodies, and as the rain gets near they all rise together, uttering their calls awhile, and circle around at a considerable height and then disappear, seemingly, into the rain.

CURSORIUS TEMMINCKII TEMMINCKII, Swains. TEMMINCK'S
OR BLACK-BELLIED COURSER.

Ref.: Swainson, Zool. Illustr. 11. pl. 106. 1822.

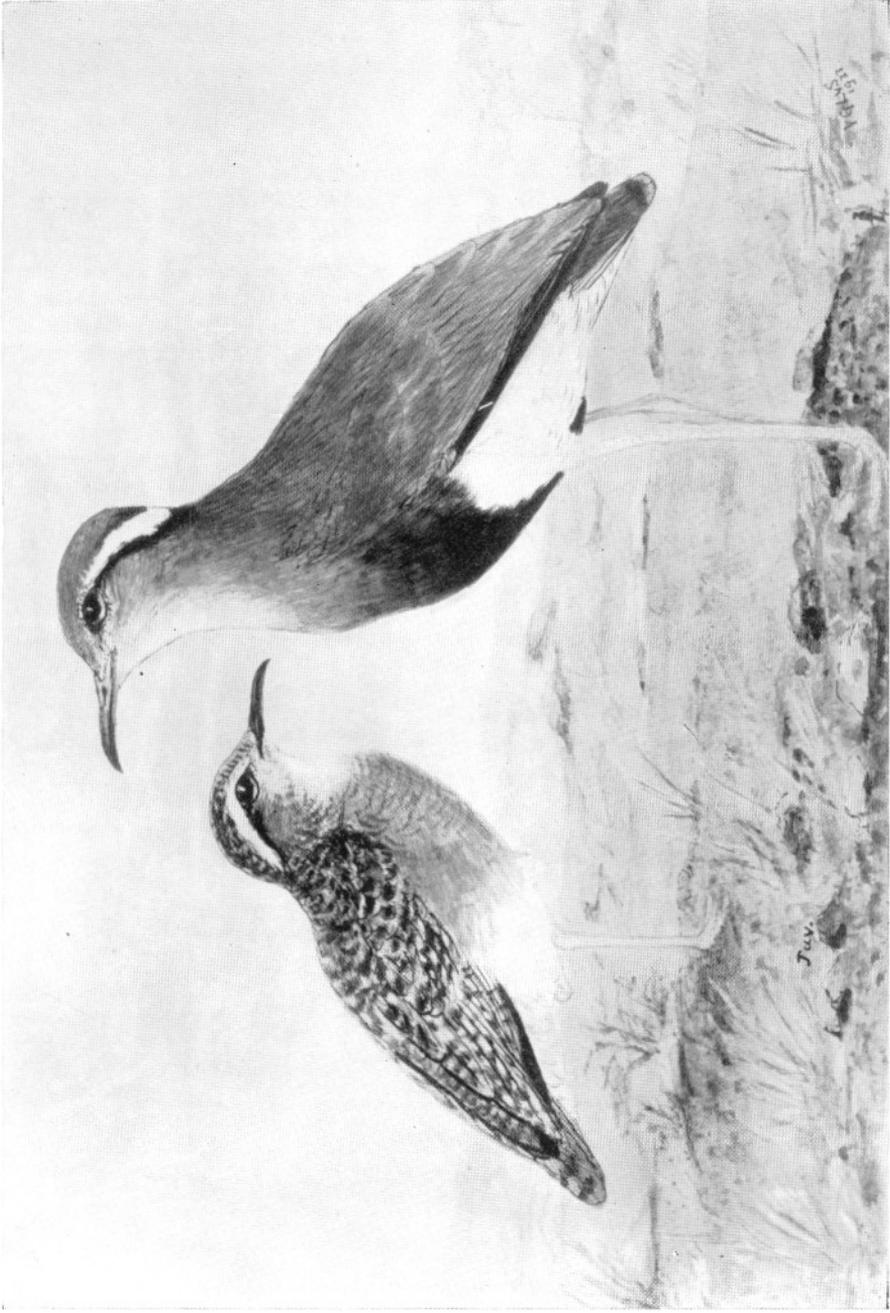
Type locality: Senegal.

DISTRIBUTION:

Throughout the drier parts of the open plains country from the Coast to Uganda.

DESCRIPTION: Male and female adult.

Top of head to nape rufescent chestnut with a triangle of black on the nape; lores paler shading to cream and white over the supercillium, this colour extending back to the nape and joining the line of the opposite side; posterior to the eye, a black streak which passes over the ear-coverts and ends at the hind-neck; throat white to cream shading to rich cream washed with rufous over the ear-coverts and the lower throat, this in turn shades into greyish-ashy-brown on the chest, washed with rusty, and merges into a chestnut patch on the lower breast; sides of body, vent, and under tail-coverts white, the centre of the abdomen with a large jet-black patch. Mantle, scapulars, coverts of wing, rump and upper tail-coverts ashy-grey-brown often with a rusty wash at the tips of the feathers; Primaries purply-blue-black, outer secondaries similar but with white tips to most, the inner ones shading to ashy-brown particularly on the inner webs; tail: outer pair white, central ones ashy-grey-brown with penultimate dark bar, others ashy, with a white tip and subterminal blue-black band. Bill, horn-brown, yellowish at base of lower; eyes brown; legs and feet white or ivory. Wings, 120-130 mm.



Juvenile.
Temminck's Black-bellied Courser. (*Cursorius temminckii temminckii*, Swains.).

Adult.

IMMATURE :

Crown of head dark brown with sandy tips to each feather; superciliary stripe white, bordered below from the posterior angle of the eye by a blackish line which extends to the nape; ear-coverts buffy with a rufescent wash; throat white merging into the ashy-grey on the breast, which in turn shades into buffy-cinnamon on the sides; flanks and abdomen and under tail-coverts white. Hind-neck, mantle, scapulars, back, rump and upper tail-coverts, wing-coverts sandy to buff with dark centres and irregular barring; tail ashy-brown with dark cross-bars and pale tips, outer pair greyish, all more pointed than in the adult.

HABITS :

Temminck's Black-bellied Courser has a very wide distribution but the type of country inhabited is very similar. It frequents open, broken, semi-arid country where vegetation is scarce and bush growth is scanty, nevertheless, one not infrequently finds them in open pastureland when the grass is short, or in these areas when the grass has been burnt off. These birds are subject to local migrations and at such times one may find them on cultivated fields which have not been planted or on which the growth is short; further, they may even be met with in coffee plantations. It was particularly plentiful in the Witu district in May 1916, but was apparently not then breeding, but immature birds in half adult plumage were plentiful.

It is common on the plains outside Nairobi, especially in the vicinity of "Lone Tree," to Stony Athi. It breeds in this district in some numbers every year. It is very often seen on golf courses doubtless frequenting these spots on account of the open fairways which give them free movement; they do not frequent long grass.

I have met with this bird from sea-level to 9000 ft., but at over 6000 ft. the birds are usually on migration.

In general behaviour this species resembles the previous one, but one sees them in much larger flocks, sometimes 20 or more, parties that have come together during the "off season." When one first comes upon them, they are not unduly shy; they stand motionless or crouch in a squatting position, and if not disturbed further, will relax and continue feeding. If at all disturbed, they will run—and they have a wonderful turn of speed—rather than take flight. When they do fly, the whole appearance of the bird is changed, for then, the deep purple-black flight feathers are exposed, and the white-tipped secondaries show up conspicuously. But their flight is not far; they land and run a few yards, and plover-like they jerk their heads up and down.

They feed almost entirely on insects, but small land shells and seeds are sometimes taken. Though they will feed at almost any time

of the day, their principal hunting times are early morning and afternoon; at noon day they lie up in the shade of some rock or small stunted herb.

The nesting season would appear to be not too well known. I have eggs taken in the month of April to May, August, December, while Jackson obtained them in July in the Naivasha district. Newly hatched young were seen in May and July. Two eggs only are laid on the bare ground or in a shallow depression. They are stone grey to whitish in ground colour with lilac submerged marks the whole being lined and speckled with blackish and brown. Average size 27 x 23 mm. The young in down are very protectively coloured, being mottled with shades of brown and blackish on a greyish to whitish ground. If one comes upon a pair with newly-hatched young, they will go through the performance usually noted in the case of plovers, that is, one parent will shuffle along the ground with hanging wings, as though these were broken, the while uttering a plaintive call, and as one goes toward the seemingly injured bird it will lure one away from the crouching young step by step, and in a circular manner until one entirely loses the spot where the bird was first put up. They will do this, but to a less extent, when they have eggs. We once found a nest of this species just off the fairway on the Jinja golf course, and here the birds were remarkably tame, taking little notice of the players as they passed along.

Their flight is rather peculiar, in that the wings are depressed in a seemingly jerky manner; actually the down stroke is rapid and there is a pause between each beat. Their call is a plaintive piping one, uttered as they fly, but at rest on the ground they have a low twittering call which is more in the nature of a warning note.

RHINOPTILUS AFRICANUS GRACILIS, Fisch. & Reichw. KENYA
TWO-BANDED COURSER.

Ref.: Fischer & Reichenow, Jrl. f. Ornith., 1884, p. 178.

Type locality: East of Kilimanjaro.

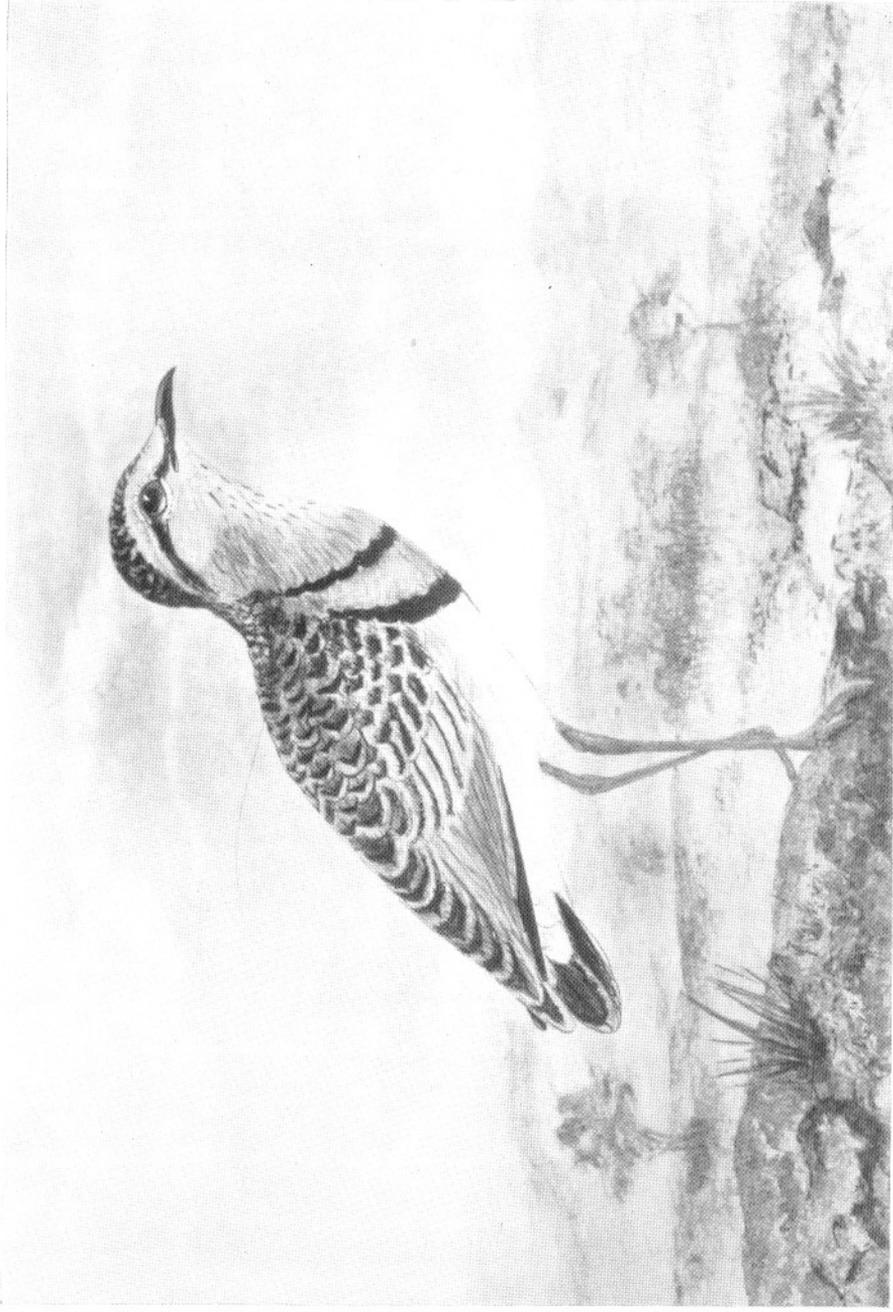
DISTRIBUTION:

Kenya, through practically the whole of Masai Reserve to Ukambani and the region north of Mt. Kenya.*

DESCRIPTION: Male and female adult.

Crown of head to nape blackish-brown, each feather edged with sandy-buff; forehead buffy, this colour extending back over the eye as a superciliary stripe; throat creamy to buff shading to sandy-buff on the upper chest and ear-coverts, these areas with fine blackish streaks;

*A further race, *B. a. hartingi*, Sharpe, type locality Somaliland, occurs in the region of the Juba River.



Kenya Two-banded Courser (*Rhinoptilus africanus gracilis*, Fisch. & Reichw.).

hind neck sandy; upper chest crossed by two black bars separated by a buffy area washed with sandy colour and shaded with greyish where it meets the mantle; the whole of the abdomen to the under tail-coverts white, washed with buff-pink on the lower breast. Mantle, scapulars, wing-coverts, long inner secondaries, ashy-grey with wide buffy tips accentuated proximally by a black line; Primaries: outer five brown-black on the outer web shading to pale cinnamon on the inner, remainder rufous cinnamon paler at margin of inner web; Secondaries: pale rufous cinnamon on the outer web shading to greyish on the proximal side of the shaft and to whitish on the margin of the inner web. Back and rump ashy-grey with buffy tips and dark bars; upper tail-coverts white; tail: outer pair white, two centrals, basal third white followed by black shading to sandy-buff at the tip and lined with black, remainder mostly blackish with pale tips. Bill, blackish, browner at base; eyes brown; legs and feet ochreous. Wings, 128-135 mm.

IMMATURE:

Very similar to the above, but median and greater wing-coverts more vermiculated on the pale ends; inner primaries with dark vermiculations and secondaries with a large amount of the central area of the feathers greyish; primaries with pale tips. Tail with much greater amount of white, and paler tips, dark vermiculated.

JUVENILE:

Unknown to me, as also the nestling in down.

HABITS:

This graceful little Courser is restricted in its distribution and occupies the area indicated above. They inhabit the sandy, rocky, more open thornbush, acacia-country, and dry plains country.

Here one comes upon them in pairs or in family parties of three to four. They appear to be resident. Like others of this group, they are expert runners and as one comes upon them in the sandy patches between the clumps of thorn bush they stand for a moment then dart behind cover. One may follow them up from bush to bush for quite a long way before they take flight. When they do get up, they fly with jerky movement and legs held pendent, and very soon alight and run. So far as I know, the eggs of this bird have not been recorded, those of the more southern race are described as two in number, buffy to greyish in ground colour with gray submerged blotches, the whole lined with scrawls and speckled with dark-brown and blackish.

The nest is a shallow scoop or a mere depression in the earth among pebbles, and there is no lining.

The birds are entirely insectivorous. Stomachs examined contained insects of various species including beetles and grass-hoppers.

RHINOPTILUS CINCTUS CINCTUS, Heugl. THREE-BANDED COURSER.

Ref. : Heuglin, Ibis, 1868, p. 31.

Type locality : Gondokoro, S. Sudan.

DISTRIBUTION :

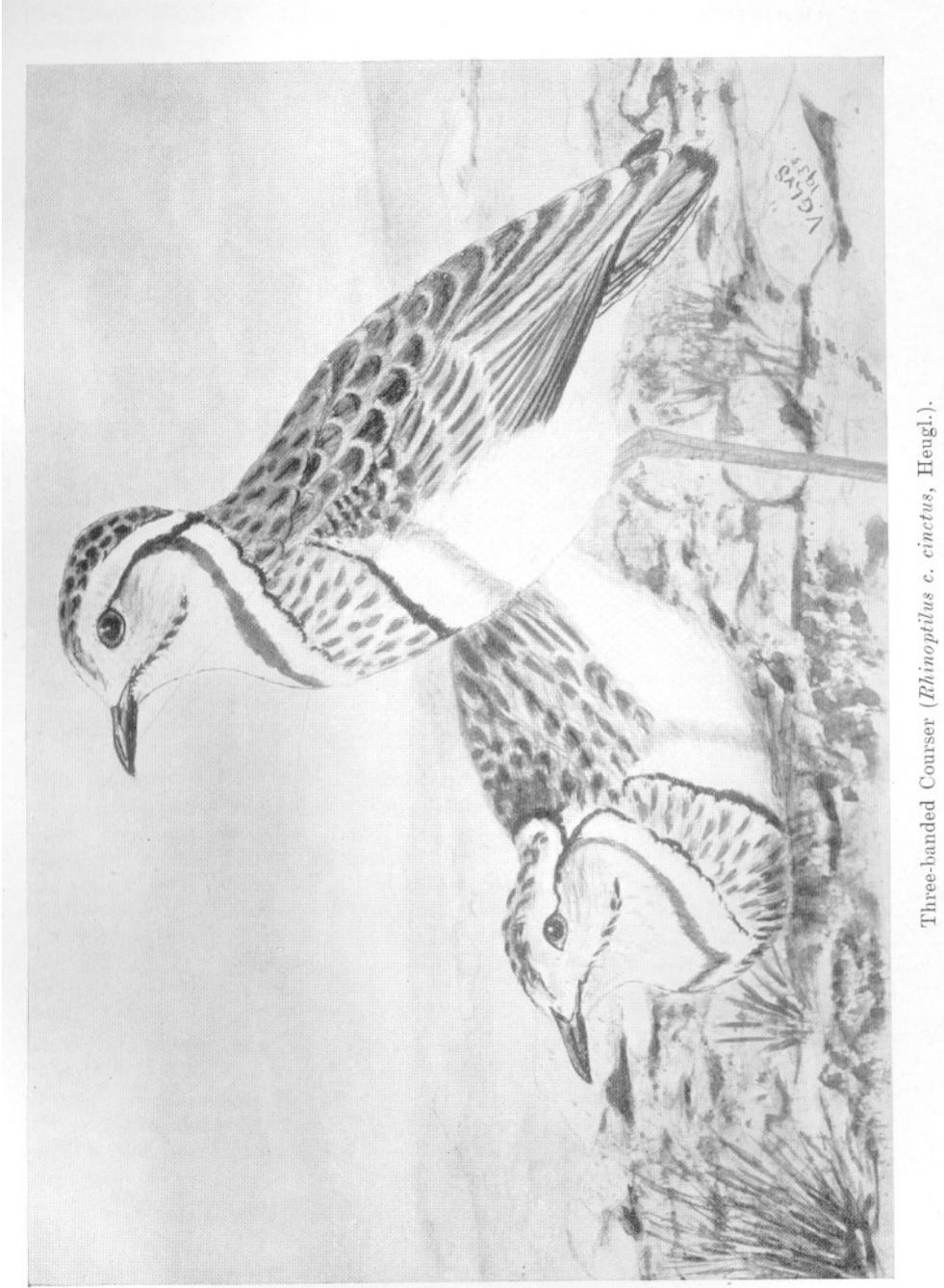
The northern and north-eastern portion of Uganda, Lake Rudolf area, east and west, northern portion of Kenya east to Jubaland, south through Ukambani, the Masai country to the plains of Kisii.

DESCRIPTION : Male and female adult.

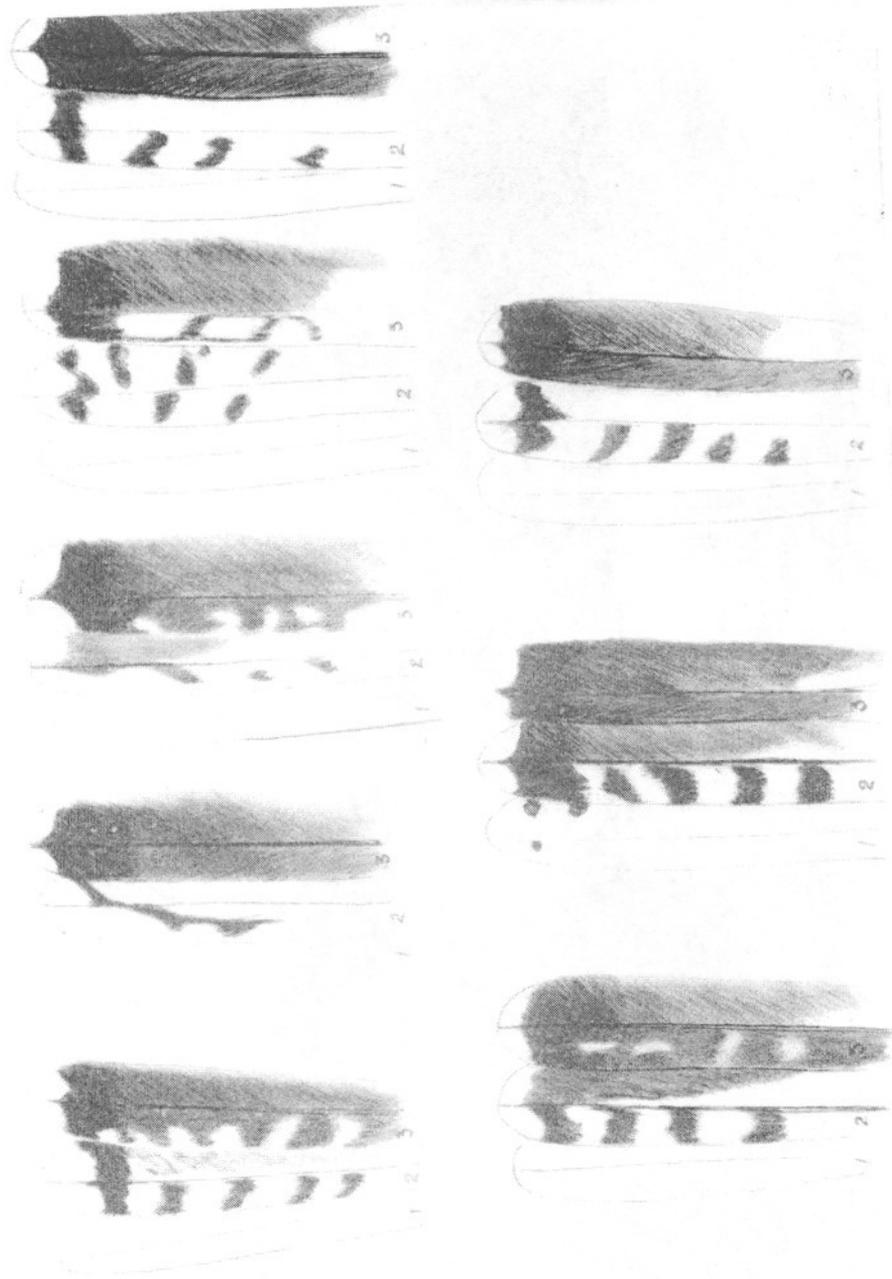
Forehead creamy to rusty-buff, this colour going back over the eye to the posterior angle where it becomes white and circles the nape to meet that of the opposite side; crown sepia with conspicuous rusty-buff margins, the nape feathers darkening to black and bordering the white nape line; lores, cheeks and ear-coverts rich rufescent-buff, streaked on the ear-coverts, and with a series of black spots from the gape to below the ear-coverts; the posterior, upper ear-coverts blackish and this colour extending back in a fine line below the white nape line and also downward and forward in a V above the speckled breast band; throat white to the first black V, but crossed by a chestnut V which starting posterior to the ear-coverts extends down and forward; the upper breast is whitish to sandy-buff on the sides each feather with a central sepia streak, the lower ones with a conspicuous subterminal black band, the series forming a marked black bar below the spotted area; the whole of the remainder of the underside is white with the exception of a pale chestnut bar which extends across the breast. Hind-neck, mantle, scapulars, lesser and median wing-coverts grey-sepia with wide marginal border of rusty-buff internally edged with darker sepia; the mantle feathers rather more strongly and richly edged. Primaries, sepia with pale tips; secondaries similar but slightly more greyish, edged with rufous-buff and white-tipped; back and rump ashy-brown with rusty tips; upper tail-coverts white; tail: outer pair white, next white with broken dark bars, remainder ashy-brown with subterminal black bar and white ends, central pair with little black subterminally, pale edged and tipped. Bill, black at tip, basally yellowish; eyes light brown; legs and feet ochreous to yellowish. Wings, 145-160 mm.

IMMATURE :

Somewhat like the mature, but margins of the feathers paler; head more blackish; eye stripe whitish; first V band less chestnut more black, and breast speckling not so defined but dark marks bigger; second chestnut bar hardly present and black band more broken and ill-defined; tail feathers vermiculated at margins and the upper tail-coverts white only at tips.



Three-banded Courser (*Rhinoptilus c. cinctus*, Heugl.).



Sketch to show the variation in the three outer tail feathers of *Rhinophilus cinctus cinctus*, Heugl.

JUVENILE :

The down-plumage is unknown to me.

HABITS :

This Courser lives in the dry steppe and desert country for the most part, but in its southern range it frequents the drier bush and thorn country. I have found them to be most abundant in the region of the Juba River, the Northern frontier and in the Lake Rudolf district. One usually finds them in pairs and unless one notices them actually moving, they are very difficult to detect, so closely does their plumage harmonise with the ground. They seek protection by running rather than flight, if suddenly disturbed, but if one has detected them, and approach is slow and oblique, they will stand and can then be observed at close quarters. I have watched these birds catching a small species of "Tiger beetle (Cicendelid) a species which is noted for its quickness of movement; the birds were even quicker, and seldom failed to make a capture, whereas I, with my net was more often unsuccessful. These birds are extremely agile but they seem to have a subconscious appreciation of their strongly protective colouration and as they run off they will stop close to some object, such as a rock or stunted bleached bush and they simply disappear. They are very attentive in their care for their young and even when these are well grown and capable of flight, they remain with the parents who attempt to draw off attention from the young to themselves, by running a little way then stopping and repeating this several times, deliberately lead one away; their warning calls being uttered all the while. At the first sign of danger, the young will crouch, with heads held low almost on the ground.

They lay their eggs on the bare ground, in a shallow depression. Two form the clutch, and these are greyish to putty coloured, with lilac submerged blotches and numerous streaks and scrawly marks of dark brown to blackish. They resemble, to a most remarkable degree, the stones and pebbles around. Both birds share in incubation. The nesting season is not really known; eggs are recorded in December and November, also April to June.

RHINOPTILUS CINCTUS EMINI, Zedlitz. EMIN'S THREE-BANDED COURSER.

Ref. : Zedlitz, Jrl. f Ornith., 1914, p. 624.

Type locality : Ukerewe Island, S. Lake Victoria.

DISTRIBUTION :

The islands of south Lake Victoria and the mainland of northern Tanganyika and the plains of South Kavirondo.

DESCRIPTION :

This race differs from the typical form in being larger, in having longer tarsi and in the amount of white in the tail. The length of the

tarsus is given as 63-66 mm. and the tail as having the outer one white, the next only partly white and the third no white. The characters are not very satisfactory, though the race is supported by both Sclater and Friedmann.

I have typical birds of the nominate race which have the tarsus 67 mm. minimum 55 mm. The markings on the outer tail feathers are very variable as can be seen from the accompanying diagram.

RHINOPTILUS CHALCOPHTERUS CHALCOPHTERUS, Temm.
PURPLE-WING-TIP COURSER.

Ref. : Temminck, Pl. col. Livr., 50, 1824.

Type locality : Senegal.

DISTRIBUTION :

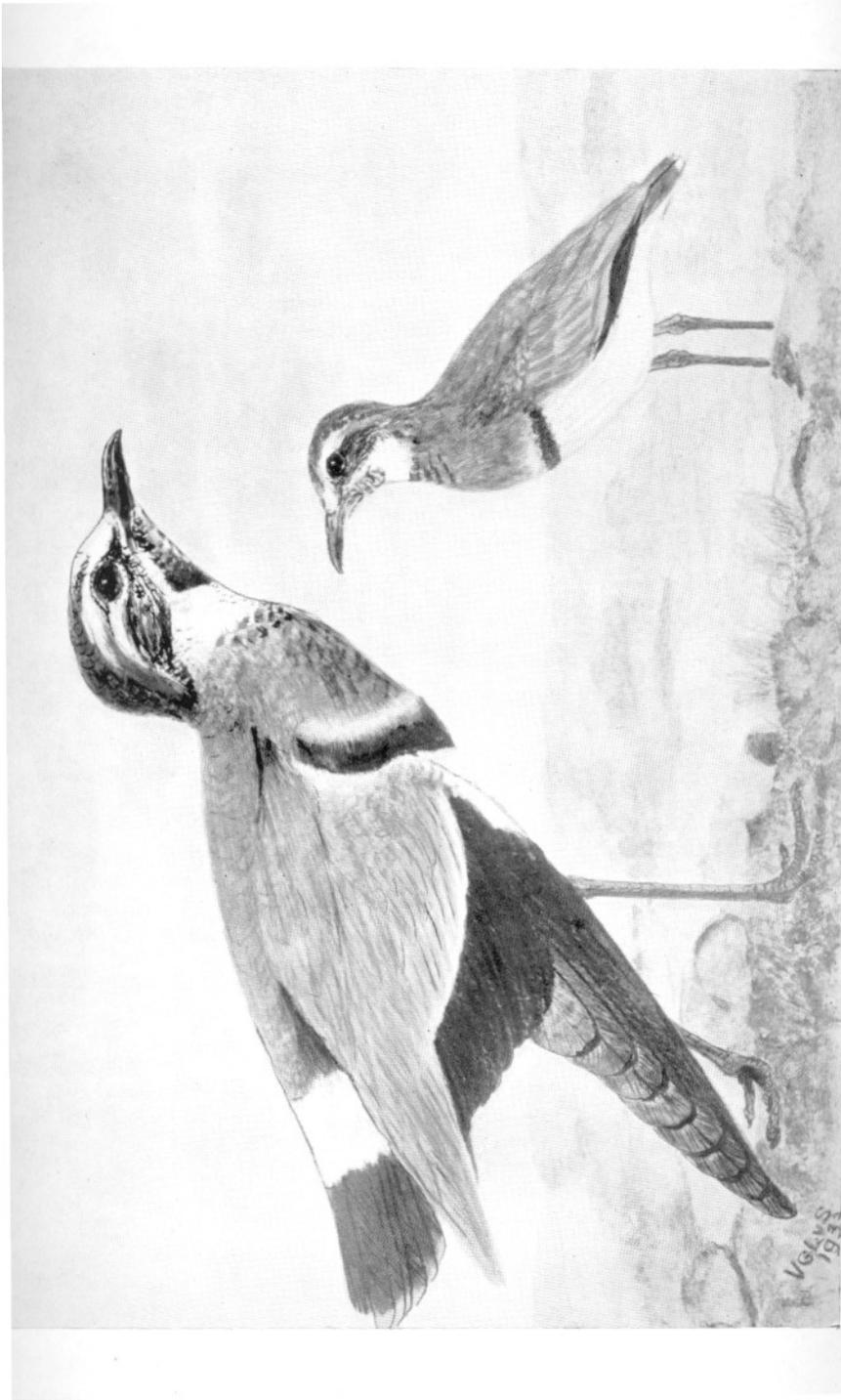
The nominate race ranges through Uganda and the north-western portion of Kenya.

DESCRIPTION : MALE AND FEMALE.

Forehead and a line above the eye white, the superciliary line edged with black below and becoming chestnut posteriorly; a white line runs from the posterior angle of the eye to the line of the ear-coverts; crown dark ashy-brown with a few white to buff feathers in the centre of front; lores and ear-coverts pale rufescent streaked with black; chin and throat white, the latter with an interrupted patch of blackish and ashy on the sides, which may meet as a blackish triangular throat patch; the lower throat is occasionally spotted with blackish above the ashy-grey of the fore neck; the ashy-grey of the fore neck is succeeded by a buffy line which in turn shades to ashy-grey, and this is distally bordered by black; rest of the underside to under tail-coverts, white, washed with buffy to sandy on the sides; hind-neck, mantle, scapulars, back and rump and the majority of the wing-coverts ashy-grey-brown, the long scapulars with a purply sheen; coverts on edge of wing, white; bastard wing blue-black; primary coverts similar; secondaries purply-blue-black on outer web and obliquely on inner web, basally white; primaries purply-blue-black with the tips strongly metallic purple shading to olive green and blue proximally. Upper tail-coverts white; tail basally white, greater part sepia-ashy-grey darkening distally and with a white tip, the body shaded with olive. Under surface of wing on coverts white with black patches. Bill, horn-black at tip, red at base; eyelids reddish; eyes hazel to brown; legs and feet reddish lilac. Wings, 168-179 mm. Some specimens have the ear-coverts black.

IMMATURE :

Somewhat like the adult, but head markings less defined, the forehead feathers tipped with rusty as are all the feathers of the upper-side,



1. Purple-wing-tip Courser (*Rhinoptilus chalcopterus albofasciatus*, Sharpe). (R. c. *chalcopterus*, Temm. 2.).
2.

those of the mantle and coverts tipped sandy to ochreous. The chest band is less defined and the feathers are tipped with sandy-buff and the black edge is obscure. There are no metallic tips to the flight feathers.

Juvenile in down. Unknown and apparently undescribed.

HABITS :

Vide post.

RHINOPTILUS CHALCOPHTERUS ALBOFASCIATUS, Sharpe.
SOUTHERN PURPLE-WING-TIP COURSER.

Ref. : Sharpe, Bull. Brit. Ornith. Club., 1898.

Type locality : Natal.

DISTRIBUTION :

The greater part of Kenya south of the line of the Equator.

DESCRIPTION :

This race was first described by Sharpe as cited above on material from Natal, and was founded on what appears to be an immature specimen. In 1910 Neumann redescribed the adult under the name *obacurus*, the characters given being its generally darker colouration above. According to Selater, this race occurs in Tanganyika Territory while the nominate form occurs in Kenya, but material at my disposal suggests that the northern form comes into north and north-west Kenya as given under distribution.

HABITS OF BOTH RACES :

This Courser is widely distributed throughout the more wooded areas of the drier belts, such country as the thorn-bush and acacia steppes of the game country. It is much more addicted to sheltered timbered areas than any of the other Coursers and is found up to 6000 feet. I have not infrequently seen them in wattle and coffee plantations, and on more than one occasion they have been obtained in my garden (Nairobi). They are less approachable than others of the group, doubtless due to their environment, for their plumage does not by any means harmonise so well with the surroundings as do those of the other species. I would describe these birds as actually timid, for when one tries to get near enough to observe them, they scuttle away and always attempt to take shelter behind or beneath some convenient bush. It is when the bird is in the deep shadows of a bush that they become less obvious, and then they will stand. I have not observed them on the open sandy and rocky country, nevertheless where such patches occur between belts of bush, there one finds them. It is in such areas that they feed and nest. The food consists of various insects, including grasshoppers, beetles and hymenoptera. They feed in the cool of the

day, morning and evening, and at midday take shelter beneath some bush. The nest is a shallow scoop or depression with bits of grass or gravel around. Unlike the other Coursers, this bird frequently lays three eggs, not two, and these are very similar to plovers eggs. They are putty to buff in ground colour with submerged blotches of greys and lilac, with surface marks and blotches of red-brown and dark-black-brown, many of the blotches being confluent about the greatest diameter, and the more obtuse end. They average 36 x 28 mm. Not only are the eggs plover-like, but in the general behaviour of these birds, one is reminded very forcibly of various plover tactics and characteristics. When with eggs or young, the parent birds will flutter along feigning disablement or they will crouch and actually roll over on their sides.

They are subject to local migration during the "off season." The exact nesting periods are not too well known; we have eggs taken in May, June and July, and juveniles in December.

SUB-FAMILY GLAREOLINÆ.

GENUS GLAREOLA AND GALACHRYZIA (PRATINCOLES).

GLAREOLA PRATINCOLA FULLEBORNI, Neum. EAST AFRICAN PRATINCOLE.

Ref. : Neumann, Orn. Monatsb. XVIII, p. 10, 1910.

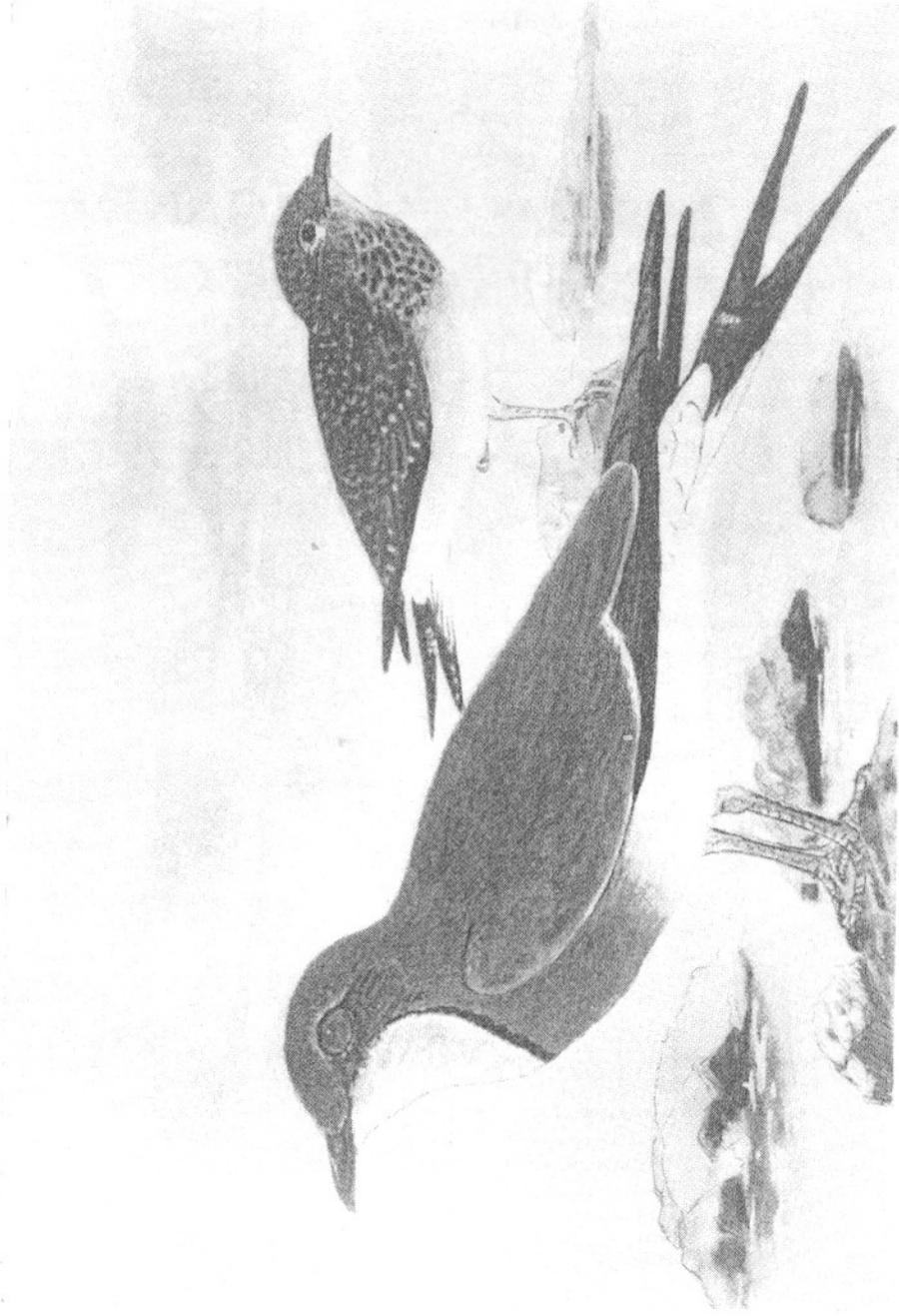
Type locality : Rikwa Lake.

DISTRIBUTION :

Through Uganda and suitable localities in Kenya.

DESCRIPTION : Male and female.

Chin and throat cream to buff demarcated by a white line followed by a black one which starts just above the gape below the lores, circling the throat patch; a slight black moustachial streak; lores dark brown; ear-coverts, ashy washed with buffy; forehead and crown, hind-neck, mantle, scapulars, back, rump and wing coverts, olive-ashy-brown, slightly darker on the first two areas; primaries black with a greenish sheen, the first primary with a white shaft; secondaries: ashy-olive-grey slightly darker on the inner webs and with whitish tips. Upper tail-coverts white; tail feathers white basally, sepia distally, the four central ones with paler ends, the outermost, mostly white on the outer web except at the tip; breast ashy-grey with a buffy tinge shading to buff on the lower breast; sides of body ashy-grey; rest of underside including the under tail-coverts white. Bill, black, basally red; eyes brown to hazel; legs and feet greyish. Wings, 170-186 mm., average 176 mm.



Adult. Juvenile.
East African Pratincole (*Glareola pratincola fullborni*, Neum.).

IMMATURE :

Very like the adult but without the defined throat patch, this being buffy and shading into the ashy-grey of the breast; no blackish on the lores; ear-coverts ashy; upper surface ashy-grey without the olive sheen and all the feathers tipped with buffy.

JUVENILE :

Throat buffy, slightly streaked with blackish; breast heavily speckled sandy-buff and sepia, merging into buffy of the lower breast and to white on the rest of the underside; crown, hind-neck, mantle, scapulars, coverts, back, rump, and wing-coverts sepia-blackish spotted with greyish buff; upper tail-coverts white; tail white at base sepia to blackish distally with buffy tips and margins. Bill dark brown; eyes grey-brown; legs and feet grey-brown.

GLAREOLA PRATINCOLA ERLANGERI, Neum. COASTAL PRATINCOLE.

Ref. : Neumann, Jr. f. Ornith., 1920, p. 78.
Type locality : Kismayu.

DISTRIBUTION :

The coastal region of Kenya north of the Tana to the Juba River and S. Somaliland.

DESCRIPTION : Male and female, adult.

Very similar to the race *fulleborni* but rather darker on the upper side and on the ashy-grey breast band, and larger. Wings, 184-204 mm. Bill, black at end, basally red; legs and feet dark brown.*

HABITS : (all races).

The various races of this species are usually found on the flats on the borders of lakes, rivers and along the coast. They occur in flocks, and restricted pairs during the breeding season. When they have associated in companies as many as a hundred birds are often seen. They are locally migratory to certain of the inland lakes of Kenya, thus they appeared in considerable numbers on the shores of Lake Naivasha in February, 1920, remaining there for a week, and passing on. They appear to be much more resident on the south end of Lake Rudolf, and the small Lake Koroli, for here we obtained them in February, June, July and November and they were breeding on the plains round Koroli in June. Friedmann records them from the same localities in June-July 1912. They were very numerous along the seaboard at Kismayu, Lamu, and the lower Juba in May.

*A further race *G. p. limbata*, hardly separable from the nominate form is recorded from Uganda and north-east Lake Rudolf. Actually, these specimens would appear to be intermediate between *limbata* and *fulleborni*. Vide Friedmann, Bull. 153, U.S. Nat. Mus.

In general appearance they differ greatly from the Coursers; they have short legs with four toes, their wings are long and pointed and their tails forked. When on the wing they remind one of a very large swallow. They take most of their food on the wing and for this reason they have very wide gapes, but they also feed off the ground, as I have observed on several occasions. The birds which visited Lakes Naivasha and Elmenteita were seen hawking insects over a partially burnt patch of open country in the late afternoon, whereas previously they had been observed on the flats surrounding the lakes. Its food consists almost entirely of insects such as beetles, grasshoppers, termites, etc., and also small mollusca. They nest in small colonies; the nests are shallow scrapings in the sand and two to three eggs are laid. They are pale stone-grey with spots, lines and blotches of dark-brown and black. 30 x 25 mm. When these birds are disturbed at their nesting grounds they hover and swoop over the intruder in much the same way as do plover and terns. Though built for flight, and capable of swift movement, these birds, nevertheless, can run with great speed. One has not infrequently observed these birds engaged in aerial play, which in my experience takes place in the late afternoon. They will rise in a body and ascend in wide circles until some height up, when they will wheel rapidly and descend with lightning speed for several feet then mount steeply and suddenly split into companies which fan out and then they all return with a rush to the bank from which they started. Bannerman has recorded this same observation as seen by Butler and Hawker. It is really remarkable.

GLAREOLA OCULARIS, Verr. MADAGASCAR PRATINCOLE.

Ref.: Verreaux, S. Af. Quart. Jrl., p. 80, 1838.

Type loc. Madagascar.

DISTRIBUTION:

Occurs on the coast of Kenya from Lamu south to Gazi, and also recorded from Kendu Bay, Lake Victoria.

DESCRIPTION:

Top of head black-brown; lores black; a white line under the eye; hind-neck, mantle, scapulars and wing-coverts ashy-brown with an olive sheen; throat and breast grey-brown paler on the mid-throat; lower breast and upper belly and sides light red-brown or rusty coloured; lower abdomen, vent and under tail-coverts white. Upper tail-coverts white; under side of wings and axillaries light chestnut, primaries black-brown; tail: central pair brown-black, next two similar but with white tips, next two almost entirely brown-black, while the outer two pairs white with black ends and *black on the margin of the outer webs*.

IMMATURE AND JUVENILE :

Unknown to me.

HABITS :

As for the preceding species, Granvik, *Jrl. f. Ornith.*, 1923, p. 34, records these birds in large flocks of fifty to one hundred along the shores of Kavirondo Gulf, most often frequenting the small, often reed-covered, islands out in the water. " Their flight is rapid but unsteady." I have had no personal experience of this bird in the field.

GLAREOLA NORDMANNI, Fisch.

**BLACK-WINGED
PRATINCOLE.**

Ref. : Fischer, *Bull. Soc. Imp. Nat. Moscou*, XV, 1842.

Type locality : S. Russia.

DISTRIBUTION :

A winter visitor to the northern parts of Uganda, but not recorded further south, but probably occurring on Lake Rudolf.

DESCRIPTION :

Crown, mantle, scapulars and wing-coverts dark olive-brown, paler on the hind-neck; back and rump slightly darker; upper tail-coverts white; primaries black-brown; secondaries same with purplish sheen and with slight white tips; under side of wing and wing-coverts *black*; tail : central pair dark black-brown with purple sheen and pale edges; the remainder with increasing white bases from inner to outermost, the longest having most of the outer web white except at the tip, the dark areas are olive-brown with purple sheen.

The throat is whitish at the chin then shading to cream and buff and circled by a black band which starts below the eyes; upper breast ashy-brown shading to buffy below and on the sides and white over all the rest of the under side. Legs and feet black.

HABITS :

In general appearance this species is very similar to the races of *G. pratincola* already dealt with, but can be at once distinguished by its darker colour above and the *black axillaries and blackish underside of the wings*. In habits it resembles the others of this group. It has been reported in large numbers on the Uganda White Nile by Seth-Smith and Pitman in March and April, probably birds on their northward movement to the breeding grounds in the Kirghiz Steppes in Russia where they nest in May.

Many more observations need to be made on these birds during their movements through East Africa than are on record.

GALACHRYSIA NUCHALIS EMINI*, Shelley. **EMIN'S WHITE-COLLARED PRATINCOLE.*

Ref. : Shelley, Proc. Zool. Soc., 1888, p. 49.

Type locality: Foda, Wadelai.

DISTRIBUTION :

Uganda, in the vicinity of water, particularly the north end of Lake Victoria.

DESCRIPTION : Male and female.

Forehead and crown dark earth-grey or ashy-grey; lores and eyelids and streak behind eye black; a white collar starts from below the eye and circles the nape; chin black; throat and breast pale ashy-grey paling towards the abdomen and becoming white on the vent and under tail-coverts; hind-neck ashy-grey, slightly darker on the mantle, scapulars, back and wing-coverts, darker on the rump; greater wing-coverts with pale edges; upper tail-coverts white; primaries brown-black; secondaries brown-black with basal area on inner webs white; tail: central three pairs white at base rest blackish with white tips, the remaining feathers with increasing white from within out with black tips and black along the margin of the outer webs. Bill, black at end, basally coral red; eyes brown; legs and feet coral red. Wings, 145-155 mm.

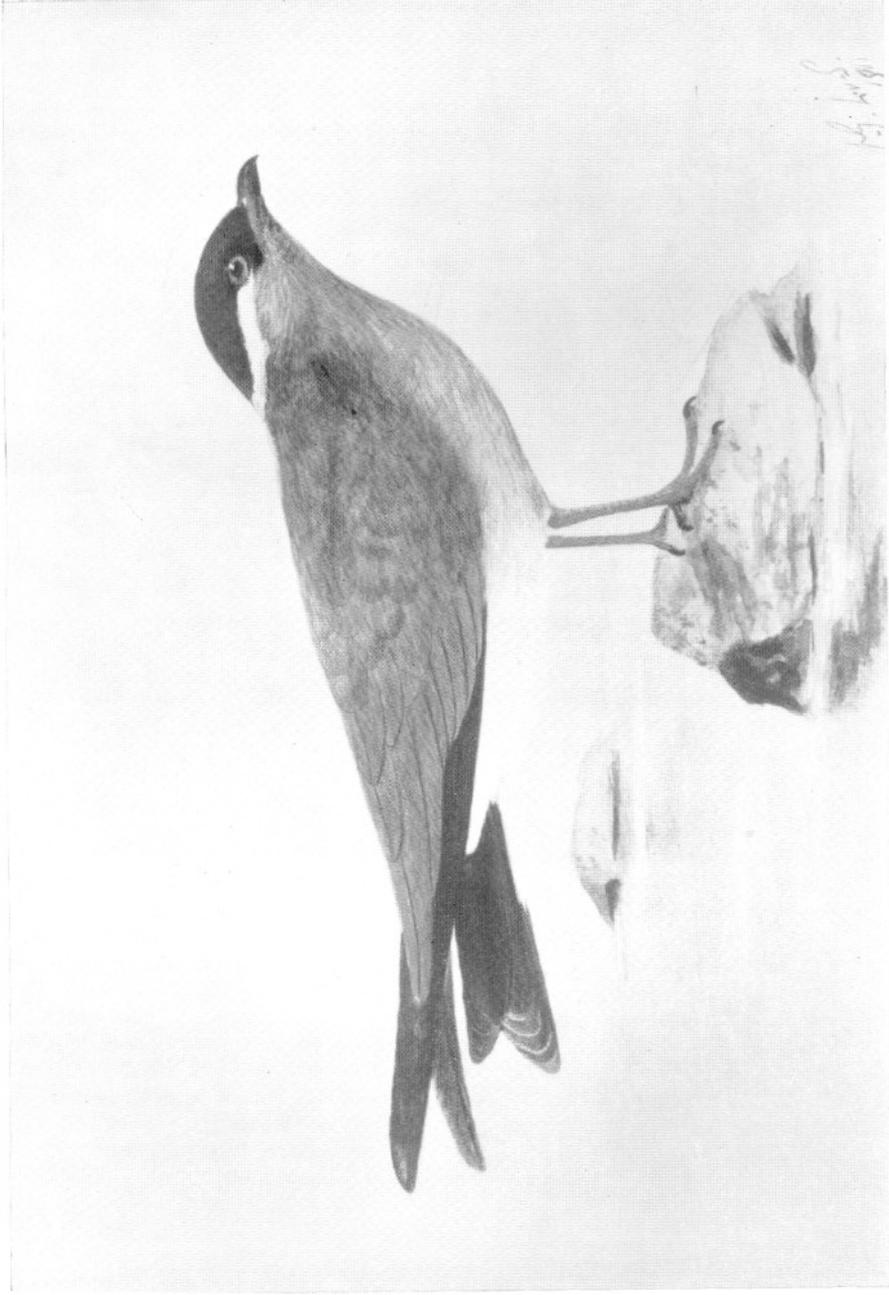
JUVENILE AND IMMATURE :

I have no notes on these.

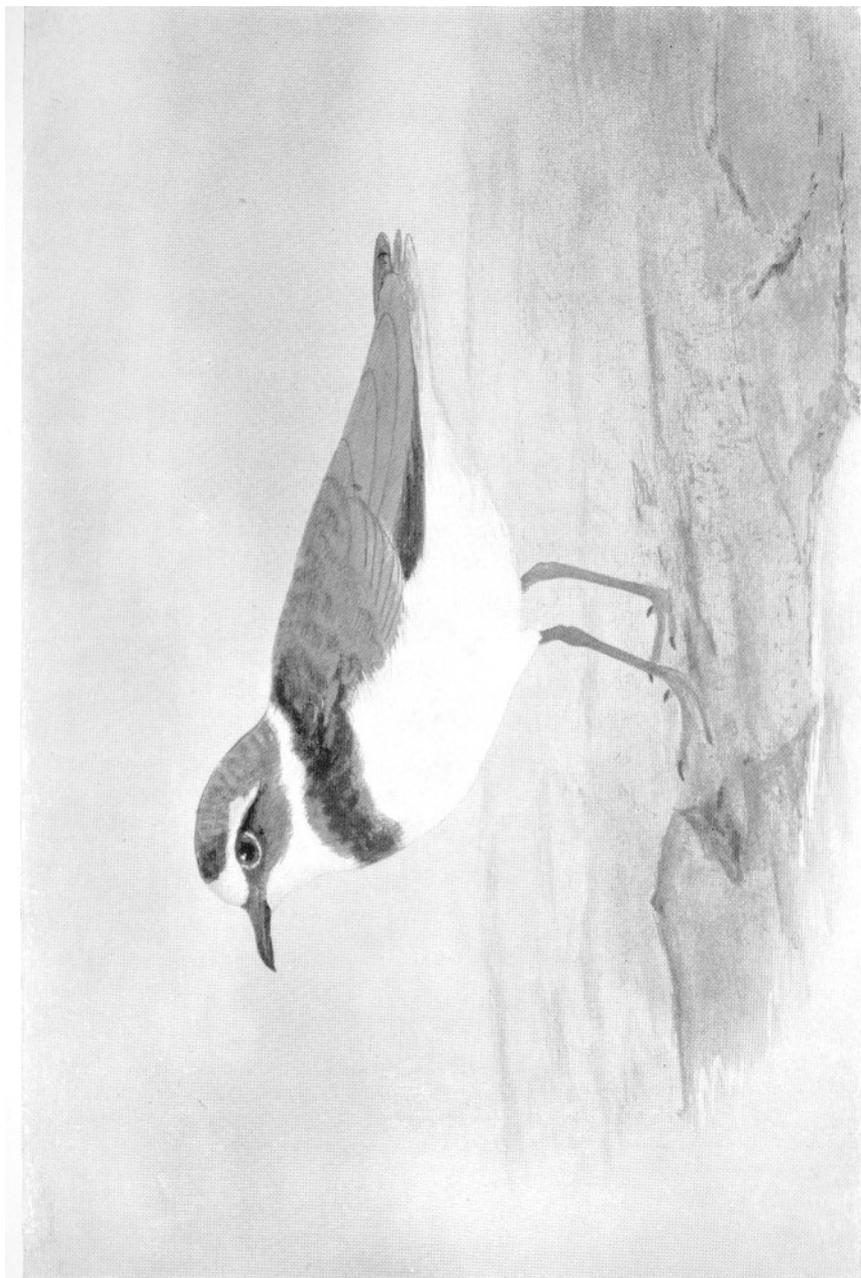
HABITS :

This bird is essentially associated with water, and especially where there are little rocky islets such as one finds in great abundance on the north end of Lake Victoria. In this area the bird can be called common. During the breeding season practically every little islet has its pair of nesting birds. They are even found on the rocks below the Ripon Falls at Jinja where the spray continually keeps the surface moist and wet. They are active and not at all shy and do not fly far when disturbed; but circle round and alight on some nearby rock. Should this rock be occupied by another pair, they drive the intruder off at once.

The nesting season is somewhat ill-defined and erratic. We have eggs taken in January-June and Pitman records them as late as August. Two eggs, occasionally three, form the clutch. They vary in ground colour from white to grey and buff with lines and spots and blotches of blackish and dark-brown and grey submerged blotches and marks. Some eggs have the marks defined and sparse, others are almost covered all over or the blotches are concentrated in a ring round the largest diameter. Size average 30 x 22 mm. The eggs are laid on the bare rock, sometimes in sheltered hollows, often quite exposed, sometimes on debris in a crack. The birds are close sitters.



Emin's White-collared Pratincole (*Galachrysis nuchalis emini*, Shelley.).



Siberian or Eastern Ringed Plover (*Charadrius hiaticula tundra*, Lowe). Winter plumage.