

for these purposes it is calculated that the Society should have an income of at least £180 a year.

If each member would secure one new member during the current year and write himself, or induce a friend to send in an article or interesting 'note' for the Journal, the Society would be on a sound basis, and the present continual anxiety of the Editors as to where the necessary manuscript for the next Journal is coming from would be avoided.

In conclusion, the Committee thank all members who have helped during the past year by contributing articles to the Journal or introduction of new members, to the measure of success the Society has attained.

JOHN SERGEANT,  
*Honorary Secretary.*

NAIROBI, *March* 1911.

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## BIRDS IN UGANDA FORESTS

By L. M. SETH-SMITH

I think I may say that African forests appeal to everyone—the lovely cool shade, the silence, the vast height of the trees—but more especially do they appeal to naturalists, as they contain an infinite variety of every kind of living creature, many of which, I believe, still remain to be discovered; but more important still, the habits of nearly all are practically unknown.

I do not wish to insinuate that the habits of creatures whose habitat is in the more open country are well known, but observations are much more difficult in forests and, hence, far less is known.

It is most extraordinary how one is able to walk through a forest without seeing or hearing a bird, except, of course, some of the larger species, such as glossy starlings, parrots, hornbills, &c., and possibly catching a glimpse of some bird as it flies across one's path like a flash and disappears into the undergrowth. Only a few days ago I was walking with a friend

through a large forest, when he suddenly exclaimed : ' That's the first bird I have seen in the forest.' Quite so, but what a difference when one remains quiet for a few minutes. A moving leaf catches one's eye, then a twitter is heard in a thicket in front, and by degrees the place seems full of birds ; but even then the undergrowth is too thick to see much, and only now and then does one catch a sight of anything.

However, it is one's only chance to remain quite quiet, and, as I personally prefer to be as comfortable as possible, I always take out with me a chair, and usually one or two boys who have to remain absolutely quiet, but are useful for retrieving.

One loses quite a large percentage of birds by their dropping into thick undergrowth and vanishing—that is the only word I can use ; they fall and the spot is marked as carefully as possible, but no sign of the bird can be found, and the search is at last given up in disgust.

It should be remembered that birds when shot not unfrequently catch in the undergrowth, and this should be searched if the bird is not found on the ground.

The majority of forest birds are of dull colouration, and so we get the sunbirds represented in forests by *Cyanomitra obscura* and the genus *Anthothreptes*, of which the species *axillaris*, *hypodela* and *tephroloema*, are all found in the Budongo forest.

Most of the birds I shall mention here have been obtained by me in the above-mentioned forest, which lies in a triangle of country between Masindi, Butiaba, and Fajao.

The tits are represented by *Parus funereus* (the dusky tit-mouse) and *Parisoma plumbeum* (Hartlaub's tit-warbler), which have the typical tit habit of searching every cranny and crevice in bark for their food. These genera, unlike their cousin *Ægithalus* (of which we get the species *parvulus* in the country), prefer to keep to the larger stems of trees and at a reasonable height from the ground, whereas my very limited experience of *parvulus* shows that it keeps to the topmost small branches of high trees.

The genus *Nigrita* (negro finches) is represented by *schistacea*, *diabolica*, and *fusconota*.

The weaver birds are interesting. *Spermospisa rubricapilla* is to be found in most of the forests in Uganda, I believe, but it is not necessarily a forest bird, as it is also to be found in patches of thick bush. I was fortunate in obtaining the type of the male of this species in the Budongo forest, the bird previously being known, I believe, only by the skins of two females. I have since obtained it at Mubende and in the Mabira forest, and feel sure I have seen some on several other occasions.

It is without doubt a very shy bird and keeps almost exclusively to thick undergrowth, and this must be the only reason that it is so little known, as its bright red breast is very conspicuous.

*Malimbus* is represented by *rubricollis* and *malimbicus*. These are weaver finches. I watched a family party of the latter species a short while ago in the Mabira forest. The young were in that stage in which they were quite capable of finding their food, but at the same time liked to be fed by the old birds. At the distance the young birds looked just like the females in plumage. They are fascinating birds to watch, quite as much at home, while searching for food, clinging to the underside of branches as on the top, the bright red head being a very conspicuous object in the dull light of a forest, especially when a ray of sun catches it.

Of *Cinnamopteryx* I have obtained a pair of *tricolor* (chestnut weaver finch) in the Mabira forest, but the female is identical with the description of *C. interscapularis* which Shelley considers may be a black-breasted variety of *tricolor*. I feel sure that my skins are a pair, but they have not yet been sent home for identification.

Orioles are represented by *Brachyrhynchus*, whose fine notes frequently resound throughout the forest.

*Nicator chloris* is found in most of the forests. It is a shy bird, and I have usually seen it in thick undergrowth.

In 1907 I obtained a pair of *Bleda woosnami* (Woosnam's yellow bulbul) in the Budongo forest. This species had only a few months previously been found for the first time by the Ruwensori Expedition. This forest also produced a specimen which, at first, puzzled the authorities at the South Kensington

Museum, but proved to be *Sylviella toroensis* (the Toro crombec), of which the only previously known specimen was obtained by Mr. Jackson. My specimen had a tail about half an inch longer than the type. Closely allied to this rarity I obtained a new species, which I named *Cryptolopha budongoensis* (the Budongo fly-catcher), of which a pair were obtained.

*Apalis denti* (Dent's warbler) and *Alethe carruthersi* (Carruthers' robin-chat), both named after members of the Ruwensori Expedition, were also obtained.

Those two charming birds, *Dyaphorophya castanea* and *Jamesoni*, are fairly common. They seem like little balls of fluff in one's hand, the very short tail hardly showing. They make at times a curious clicking noise when flitting about, apparently made with the beak.

*Erythrocerus congicus* and *Trochocercus kibaliensis* (fly-catchers), both species first obtained by the Alexander-Gosling Expedition, were obtained in the Budongo forest.

Both *Terpsiphone cristata* and *Emini* (Paradise fly-catchers) are common. By-the-by, does *Emini* change into the white plumage like *cristata* ?

There are just two species I should like to mention, *Columba uncineta* and *Guttera cristata*. The former, a fine wood-pigeon, has been shot by very few collectors, and yet it is to be found in almost every forest in Uganda and Unyoro. It is a shy bird and keeps to the tops of trees and so escapes observation to a large extent, but early in the morning and in the evening it feeds lower down on trees, which the Baganda call Musasa, together with green pigeons. Its note is a very mournful coo-oo, and can easily be distinguished once learnt ; and, lastly, *Guttera cristata*, a most lovely blue-spotted guinea-fowl, with black crest.

I took one of these birds home alive three years ago, and it is, I believe, still to be seen in the Zoological Gardens. What was most noticeable about it was its extreme tameness almost immediately after being caught, and the species should thus be very easily domesticated. I fed it on the journey on raw meat and biscuits mixed up, possibly not the best diet, but it thrived, and when in England it remained in an aviary about two years, its main food being black beetles. The reason of its dismissal to the Zoo was, that the lady of the household

imagined that black beetles were being encouraged rather than got rid of, for the sake of the bird. My specimens appear to have been brighter than those previously in collections, or there is some slight difference, and it has been given the rank of a sub-species named *Guttera cristata seth-smithi*, though the difference is, I believe, so slight that it would appear to be a mistake to form a sub-species of it until many more specimens have been obtained.

I am afraid that the above is but little more than a list of birds ; but I think it shows that there are a great many birds of immense interest in forests, especially when I mention that most of these birds were obtained in my spare time during a few days I spent in the forest in 1907.

I am quite sure that if one could spend a year collecting, not only skins but notes of nests, eggs, and habits of forest birds, a great deal of new and extremely interesting information would be obtained, as I believe very little is at present known about this most fascinating branch of Ornithology.

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## A NOTE ON ANTHROPOMETRY

BY NORMAN LEYS, M.B., B.Ch.

Anthropometry is the least interesting branch of anthropology. It has no room for the exercise of imagination and no human interest. On the other hand, there is little room for fancy or prejudice, and one's facts, unless indeed one cooks them, are final and indisputable.

In anthropometry measurements of the human body are made with the purpose of determining race. Races, of course, are popularly determined by other means. We tell a man's race by his language, his clothes, his religion. Unfortunately, investigation shows that these tests are unreliable. Probably, for instance, only a minority of those who now speak English are of the English race. Not only in Ireland and Scotland, but in French Canada, Dutch South Africa, Asiatic India, Cosmopolitan America, our language