

With regard to the habits of these birds, little is known. They are birds of the dense forests, which fact would account for them being overlooked so long in Uganda.

They are shy and timid, and difficult to procure. Owing to their partiality for the thick forest, these birds do not fly swiftly nor far, but trust to their running powers to avoid pursuit. My head collector reports that the best way to find and keep in touch with these birds is with a good hunting dog.

These birds are usually found in pairs or small coveys. I have not heard them calling, but they are said to utter a low whistling note when feeding amongst the fallen leaves.

Breeding apparently takes place in May and June, during which months females have been collected with swollen ovaries and dilated oviducts. Young birds in first plumage have been shot in September.

So far, the only locality in Uganda where these birds have been taken is in the great Mabira Forest in Chagwe.

The frontispiece, representing male and female, gives one a good idea as to the plumage and form of these birds; a noticeable feature is the slender bill and comparatively short legs.

The colouration of the sexes differs to such an extent as to lead one at a first glance to think that these birds represented different species. The fact that some females possess long spurs also adds to this supposition.

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## FISHING AT MAFIA ISLAND

BY EDITOR

The waters around Mafia Island have often been highly spoken of as a favourite haunt of game fish. His Excellency the Governor recently had to proceed there on duty with his staff, so he determined to test the locality, and took with him a motor-boat.

At midday on September 24 His Excellency's party anchored some little distance from the island, and at 2.45 commenced

fishing on an ebb tide ; no natural bait was available, so spoons were used.

In about ten minutes His Excellency hooked a good fighter, which played hard for twenty minutes and then unfortunately broke away.

From there onwards hardly five minutes elapsed without a run, and the two rods had two hours' great sport. Three times each rod had a fish on simultaneously as the spoon passed through a school.

Four or five fish were lost after varying periods of play, and one broke away.

By 4.45 p.m. each rod had secured four fish, all King-fish (Nguru). It was noticeable that they were considerably lighter in colour than those from Mombasa, and they were desperately hard fighters.

The four His Excellency landed weighed respectively 22 lb., 18 lb., 16 lb., and 10 lb., and those caught by J. weighed 21 lb., 17 lb., 11 lb., and 10 lb.

On the way back to the yacht J. caught another of 16 lb.

This made up a total amount of nine fish for two and a quarter hours' fishing, weighing 141 lb.

They fished again on September 26 from 2.30 to 5.30 p.m., and had even better sport than on the previous occasion.

All the fish met with were King-fish, and at one particular part of the fishing ground the boat rarely passed over the spot without one of the fishermen getting a run.

Three or four times both rods struck fish at the same time, and on one occasion both were landed.

One of His Excellency's fish, a twenty pounder, met with a curious mishap. When gaffed into the boat it was found that the whole of the tail and after part of the body had been bitten off by a shark while being played, but nothing unusual was felt. His Excellency's share of the bag was seven fish weighing respectively 25, 20, 14, 13, 12, 11, and 9 lb.—total 104 lb.

J. landed four fish, 16, 14, 12, and 9 lb.—total 51 lb.

H. F. W. landed one fish of 16 lb.

Total for three hours' fishing—twelve fish weighing 171 lb. The same ground was fished over on September 27 from 5.30 to 8.30 a.m., and excellent sport was again the result.

His Excellency fished each day with the spoon only, but on the 26th and 27th J. used spoon and natural bait alternately.

On the 27th His Excellency killed seven King-fish weighing 20, 20, 18, 14, 13, 11, and 10 lb., also one small Barracuda of 6 lb.—total weight 112 lb.

J. secured five King-fish of 18, 18, 18, 14, and 14 lb. respectively—total 82 lb.

H. F. W. landed one King-fish of 9 lb.

Total for three hours' fishing on the 27th, 203 lb.

Thus during two afternoons and one morning the party killed thirty-five fish weighing altogether 515 lb., average weight 15 lb. The only regret expressed was that fishing ground had to be left so soon.

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## THE DESICCATION OF AFRICA

BY R. L. HARGER

This question is one that has formed the subject of many notes made during wanderings in Africa, extending over a number of years.

My interest in it was revived by the article by Mr. C. W. Hobley, which appeared in No. 9 of the Society's Journal.

I will first quote a few extracts bearing on the subject from the works of some of the older travellers, and will then venture to add some notes of my own observations.

The work called 'The Native Races of South Africa,' by George W. Stow, which deals with travels in South Africa from about 1843 onwards, contains some facts of interest.

(a) 'It is authoritatively stated that since the early days of the Korana occupation (end of fourteenth or beginning of fifteenth century) of the portion of the country we are now speaking of (South O.F.S. and N. Cape Colony) a great alteration has taken place in its water supply. Then the Kuruni is declared to have been a great river, which sometimes rose and continued high so long that women who happened to be on