

On movements, and a roost of the African Pied Wagtail, *Motacilla aguimp vidua* Sundevall

by C. R. S. PITMAN

Received 20th December, 1965

With reference to K. E. L. Simmons' notes on the White Wagtail, *Motacilla a. alba* Linn. in *Bull. B.O.C.* 85 (9) (pp. 161-68), the following extracts from Annual Reports of the Uganda Game Department are of interest.

1937, para. 137. "Black-and-White Wagtail (*Motacilla aguimp vidua*). This familiar and friendly little species indulges in considerable local movement, and a flock of thirty was observed at Katebo on the Victoria Nyanza (N.W.) on 2nd March. At Entebbe a pair, after an absence of several months, re-appeared in their breeding haunts on 21st February."

1950, para. 359 (27). "African Pied Wagtail (*Motacilla aguimp vidua*). This confiding resident nests, according to Jackson (*l.c.*), from February to June and again from October to December. Like many other wagtails it roosts gregariously when not breeding. Throughout 1950 between 200 and 400 birds (the number varied) could be found roosting at night in the small yachts anchored off the Entebbe pier, completely safe from night prowling enemies and protected from cool night winds. Many of the birds slept under the floor-boards of the yachts. As the species is known to indulge in considerable local movement (Annual Report, 1937, para. 137), an effort was made to ring some, in the hope that an idea of the extent of this movement might be obtained.

Torchlight catching operations resulted in 102 being ringed, as follows: 8th July, 16; 13th, 17; 17th, 14; 31st, 14; 7th August, 7; 7th September, 13; 4th October, 12; 6th December, 9. Jackson (*l.c.*) records that in Uganda this wagtail "is not infrequently subject to a deformed foot, a mere stump, or in the form of a club foot with the toes only missing". Over 10 per cent. of the birds ringed in 1950 had swollen, scaly legs, half as thick again as normal. Two birds ringed in the yachts in July were re-trapped there in December."

It is presumed that these hundreds of wagtails must have come from an area of considerable extent, for although widely distributed and generally associated with settlement, this species, except in the breeding season, usually occurs in pairs. It is very territorially conscious and does not tolerate intrusion.

Another dwarf Pheasant

by J. S. ASH

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It is of interest that a second dwarf cock Pheasant (*Phasianus colchicus*) has occurred in the same area in which one was found last year (Ash, 1965). The present bird was shot on 2nd November, 1965, at Middleton, near Whitchurch, Hampshire, and like the previous record this specimen was submitted by Captain A. A. L. Wills. Unfortunately, it was badly damaged by shot and was partly decomposed when seen by Captain Wills, so that only the head, a wing and one leg could be saved for examination.

The head has been preserved in 5 per cent. saline formalin and is available to anyone who may wish to study it further. Its standard measurements are compared with those from *The Handbook of British Birds*, with the 1964 Whitchurch cock and with a Northamptonshire cock described earlier (Ash, 1961).

	Measurements in mm.			
	<i>The Handbook</i>	<i>Oundle cock</i>	<i>Whitchurch 1964</i>	<i>Whitchurch 1965</i>
Wing	235-260	219	215 and 216	224
Tarsus	60-78	50	45 and 45	52
Bill (from feathers)	28-32	26	21.5	24

Weight in gms.	1394	510.3	426.5	?
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The 1965 specimen, like the 1964 Whitchurch bird, was also rather late-hatched. Based on wing moult it was 13-14 weeks of age (1st primary = 39 mm.), so that it hatched in the third week of July.

References:

Ash, J. S. (1961). Dwarfism in a Pheasant. *Bull. Brit. Orn. Club*: 81: 95-96.

— (1965). A further case of dwarfism in a Pheasant. *Bull. Brit. Orn. Club*. 85: 65-66.

Some clutches of wader eggs from E. C. Stuart Baker

by C. J. O. HARRISON

Received 17th September, 1965

Work on the egg collection which the late Col. R. F. Meiklejohn presented to the British Museum (Natural History) has revealed some unsatisfactory clutches of wader eggs among those which Meiklejohn purchased from E. C. Stuart Baker. There are two sets of four eggs of the Lapwing, *Vanellus vanellus*. These are atypically dark eggs and are accompanied by Baker's original clutch card. This bears two slips giving the locality as Perthshire and the dates as April 1913, and May 1913. Baker's comments are "presumably the same bird laid both clutches. First clutch laid about second week in April, second clutch about first week in May in same field on same ridge". One egg in the May clutch is marked in Baker's handwriting "4/ *Vanellus vulgaris* / 1463 / 5. 1913 / Perthshire", and the clutch number, species number and date are on the other three. The latter three also bear a pencilled "6" or "9" and are relatively similar although one is distinctly glossier and browner than the other two. The first egg has a matt surface and is pale olive-green, sparsely marked.

The other set of four for which Baker's data card quotes "Perthshire, April 1913" consists of three similar eggs with an "L" or "7" pencilled on them, one inscribed in Baker's hand "3/ 1463 / Dumfries / April 1910" with the "3" subsequently altered to "4", the other two inscribed "3 / 1463 / April 1910". The fourth egg is unlike the other three, with a matt surface and elongated shape. It is inscribed in Baker's hand "3 / April 1919 / Dumfries".

There is also a clutch of six eggs of the Common Snipe, *Gallinago gallinago*, but the original collector's slip, if examined closely, shows that an original clutch number of "4" has been altered to "6". The eggs are inscribed in Baker's hand "c/6, 18.5.1903". The eggs could have originated



Ash, J. S. 1966. "Another dwarf pheasant." *Bulletin of the British Ornithologists' Club* 86, 95–96.

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