Platalea alba African Spoonbill About 10-12 pairs nesting, some of which were sitting tight, presumably on eggs, while others tended small young.
The following two species were also present at the heronry but breeding, although probable, was not positively established:

Egretta ardesiaca Black Heron Although this is normally quite plentiful at Lake Jipe, only one was seen at the heronry. It circled the island for a short time before dropping into the densest area of reeds. Nothing at the time or later could positively confirm whether or not it was breeding.
Egretta garzetta Little Egret One bird was seen perched amongst a group of nesting Cattle Egrets, and later dropped out of sight, possibly to a nearby nest.

The only other resident heron which occurs at Lake Jipe (although not seen at the heronry on this occasion) is the Night Heron *Nycticorax nycticorax*. It is quite possible that there may have been some hidden in the densest parts of the island.

It would appear that the Lake Jipe heronry, unique in that there are no trees on the island, provides a secure breeding ground for most Ardeidae and Threskiornithidae occurring in the area. Certainly, those species which are normally tree-nesters appear to have readily adapted to breeding amongst dense reeds where their nests, in many cases, were 3-4 m above water level.

It is hoped that more accurate and regular data can be obtained from future visits to this heronry, for comparison with the heronries at Garsen and Kisumu.

REFERENCE

LACK, P. 1977. A small heronry at Lake Jipe, Tsavo. *Scopus* 1: 82.

D.A. Turner, Box 48019, Nairobi. Received 10 April 1978

A ROOST OF BLACK-CHESTED SNAKE EAGLES IN THE SERENGETI, TANZANIA Between the first week of September and the first week of October 1976, as many as ten Black-chested Snake Eagles *Circaetus pectoralis* were seen roosting together in a pair of tall acacia trees on the south-eastern Serengeti Plains 4 km west of Lake Ndutu. The two trees were very close together on open short grass plains about 2 km from the edge of the *Acacia tortilis* woodlands that surround Lake Ndutu.

The birds were seen on about eight occasions by various observers. All sightings were around dawn and, after first light, two or three of the birds were usually seen on the ground but within 50 m of the trees. Later in the day, eagles of the same species were seen quite commonly in the air over the surrounding plains. The roost was not seen at any other time between June 1976 and November 1977. It may be significant that the roost was seen at the end of a particularly severe dry season.

J.R. Malcolm, Museum of Comparative Zoology, Agassiz Museum, Harvard University, Cambridge, Mass 02138, U.S.A. Received 24 February 1978

LARGE NUMBERS OF *FALCO AMURENSIS* IN TANZANIA On 13 January 1956 more than a thousand Eastern Red-footed Falcons *Falco amurensis* were seen from about 18.00 hrs until dusk, flying over Dodoma. A storm had passed earlier

and the sky was misty. The large flock was flying fast on a course of 205° (i.e. 25° W of S) in a stream, nearly a mile (=1.5 km) wide, and at a height of about 300 m above ground level (altitude 1150 m). The white under-wing coverts were clearly visible in flight. During this impressive passage the birds made absolutely no sound, nor did any of them deviate from their direct flight. The passage was still in progress when dusk fell, and counting had to stop. No local roosts of this bird were known to me in the Dodoma area.

John Harpum, St. Paul's College, Cheltenham, Gloucestershire, England.
Received 23 November 1977

ELEONORA'S FALCON WINTERING IN SOUTHERN TANZANIA Eleonora's Falcon *Falco eleonorae* has for many years been thought to winter exclusively in Madagascar, travelling from its Mediterranean breeding grounds via the Red Sea, Suez and Somalia (Brown & Amadon 1968). I am therefore most grateful to John Savidge, formerly Senior Warden in Ruaha National Park, southern Tanzania, for the following information on Eleonora's Falcon in Ruaha from 1964 to 1969, which prompted my own visit to the Park in December 1970.

Savidge (*in litt.*) reported that Eleonora's Falcon arrived in Ruaha during early December immediately after the first heavy rainfall of the rainy season, and was then present in the Park throughout the rains until late March and early April. He found them more numerous and more concentrated early in the rainy season than later, and noted that they often occurred in considerable numbers, e.g. "over 80 in one straggling flock, and 300 in an afternoon, all flying over a given point". Savidge thought that numbers appeared to be directly related to the amount of rainfall and the availability of winged termites, which were normally prolific in Ruaha immediately after the onset of the rains and, as such, attracted large numbers of insect-eating birds - particularly migratory falcons. The Eleonora's Falcons were normally accompanied by small numbers of European Hobbies *F. subbuteo* and occasionally Eastern Red-footed Falcons *F. amurensis* and, as can be seen from Table 1, the arrival of the first Eleonora's coincided closely with the onset of the rainy season and the subsequent emergence of termites.

TABLE 1

Year	Rains started	First *F. eleonorae*
1964	19 December	20 December
1965	1 December	7 December
1966	6 December	20 December
1967	1 December	11 December
1968	5 December	8 December
1969	13 December	19 December

John Savidge, himself a keen and active falconer, having had a tame Eleonora's Falcon for some years earlier in Ugnada (purchased, incidentally, on the street in Kampala), was therefore understandably keen and interested in these, and other migratory falcons while he was in Ruaha.

My own visit to Ruaha National Park (4-8 December 1970) was intended to