

- Backhurst, G.C., Britton, P.L. & Mann, C.F. 1973. The less common Palearctic migrant birds of Kenya and Tanzania. *Journal of East African Natural History & National Museums* 140: 1–38.
- Backhurst, G.C. & Pearson, D.J. 1990. Ringing and migration at Ngulia, Tsavo, autumn 1988. *Scopus* 12: 127–129.
- Baillie, S.R., Marchant, J.H., Crick, H.Q.P., Noble, D.G., Balmer, D.E., Beaven, L.P., Coombes, R.H., Downie, I.S., Freeman, S.N., Joys, A.C., Leech, D.I., Raven, M.J., Robinson, R.A. & Thewlis, R.M. 2005. *Breeding birds in the wider countryside: their conservation status 2004*. BTO Research Report No. 385. Thetford: BTO.
- Baker, K. 1997. *Warblers of Europe, Asia and North Africa*. London: Christopher Helm.
- Brooks, T., Lens, L., Barnes, J., Barnes, R., Kageche Kihuria, J. & Wilder, C. 1998. The conservation status of forest birds of the Taita Hills, Kenya. *Bird Conservation International* 8: 119–139.
- Clement, P. & Helbig, A.J. 1998. Taxonomy and identification of chiffchaffs in the Western Palearctic. *British Birds* 91: 361–376.
- Jackson, C. 1999. Records. *Kenya Birds* 7: 32–48.
- Hansson, M.C., Bensch, S. & Brannstrom, O. 2000. Range expansion and the possibility of an emerging contact zone between two subspecies of Chiffchaff *Phylloscopus collybita* ssp. *Journal of Avian Biology* 31:548–558.
- Lewis, A. & Pomeroy, D. 1989. *A bird atlas of Kenya*. Rotterdam: AA Balkema.
- Mbuthia, K.M. 2003. *Ecological and ethnobotanical analyses for forest restoration in the Taita Hills*. Unpublished PhD thesis, Miami University.
- Pearson, D. 1997. *Phylloscopus*. Pp 355–356 in Urban, E.K., Fry, C.H. & Keith, S. (eds) *The birds of Africa*. Vol. 5. San Diego: Academic Press.
- Svensson, L. 1992. *Identification Guide to European Passerines*. Stockholm.
- Vorisek, P. 2003. *Population trends of European common birds*. Czech Society for Ornithology.

Toon Spanhove and Valérie Lehouck

Ghent University, Terrestrial Ecology Unit, K.L. Ledeganckstraat 35, B-9000 Gent, Belgium and National Museums of Kenya, Ornithology Department, P.O. Box 40568 00100 Nairobi, Kenya. Email: toonspanhove@hotmail.com

Scopus 26: 42–44, January 2007

Received 9 June 2005

Where does Weyns's Weaver *Ploceus weynsi* breed?

Weyns's Weaver *Ploceus weynsi* is confined to central Africa, occurring mainly around the shores of Lake Victoria and along the Congo River in the Democratic Republic of the Congo. It is primarily reported to inhabit forests (Fry & Keith 2004), but is also regularly recorded from lake-shore vegetation

(Carswell *et al.* 2005). It wanders seasonally, apparently being absent from the northern shores of Lake Victoria from June to early September (Carswell 1986), although its movement patterns are not understood. Fry & Keith (2004) report fruits as the only dietary item, although its behaviour of gleaning in the forest canopy (Fishpool 1993, pers. obs.) suggests it is insectivorous.

Very little is known of the breeding habits of this species (Fry & Keith 2004). Ash *et al.* (1991) reported the collection of a possible nest from Budongo Forest, but did not describe either the nest or its location in any way. No other nest has been found, although, due to its flocking habits, it is assumed to be a colonial breeder. In Uganda, young birds are reported to form a large proportion of flocks seen around Lake Victoria in September and are also reported in November, and young birds have been observed begging in April (Fishpool 1993). Birds are apparently known to be in breeding condition in July (Carswell 1986). In March–April, many males are in fresh plumage. Since *Ploceus* weavers generally undergo a post-breeding moult (Oschadleus & Osborne 2005, D. Oschadleus pers. com.) this suggests January–March breeding. It has further been suggested that birds move to forests to breed (Carswell 1986), although this is a somewhat puzzling statement if the species really is frugivorous, and begs the question: what are they doing in swamps?

On 2 February 2006 I visited the Mabamba Bay Important Bird Area, which encompasses an extensive marsh fringed with papyrus on the shores of Lake Victoria (Byaruhanga *et al.* 2001). Although I had never recorded Weyns's Weaver here on several previous visits, it does apparently occur here from time to time according to a local guide (K. Hannington pers. comm.). Monospecific flocks of Weyns's Weaver, numbering *c.* 50–200 birds, were flying in and out of a particular patch of papyrus bed from 10:00 to 11:00. Most seemed to be commuting between the swamp and nearby forest, with flocks repeatedly moving in both directions. When in the swamp, the flocks were focussing their attention on a tree *c.* 5 m high, with a large, spreading crown. The characteristic whizzing calls of displaying weavers were audible from the vicinity of this tree and a single nest was visible. At a distance of *c.* 100 m (the nature of the swamp prevented closer approach) the nest appeared to be a circular grass structure (typical of *Ploceus* weavers) with no extended entrance tunnel, placed on the edge of the tree *c.* 1 m above the top of the papyrus. No bird was seen displaying at the nest.

As Weyns's Weavers were the only species present at this site, and since hundreds of birds were seen flying in and out of the swamp vegetation, it is assumed that the single visible nest belonged to Weyns's Weaver. Given the number of birds attending the site, other nests must have been placed mostly within the papyrus.

Acknowledgements

Thanks to Derek Pomeroy for commenting on this manuscript.

References

- Ash, J.S., Coverdale, M.A.C. & Gullick, T.M. 1991. Comments on the status and distribution of birds in western Uganda. *Scopus* 15: 24–29.
- Byaruhanga, A., Kasoma, P. & Pomeroy, D. 2001. *Important bird areas in Uganda*. Kampala: East Africa Natural History Society.
- Carswell, M. 1986. Birds of the Kampala area. *Scopus* Special Supplement No. 2.
- Carswell, M., Pomeroy, D., Reynolds, J. & Tushabe, H. 2005. *The bird atlas of Uganda*. Oxford: British Ornithologists' Club.
- Fishpool, L.D.C. 1993. Notes on birds of the Kampala area. *Scopus* 17: 32–36.
- Fry, C.H. & Keith, S. (eds). 2004. *The birds of Africa*. Vol. 7. London: Christopher Helm.
- Oschadleus, H.D. & Osborne, T. 2005. Chestnut Weaver *Ploceus rubiginosus* biometrics and primary moult in Namibia. *Ostrich* 76: 206–211.

Michael Mills

Birding Africa, 21 Newlands Road, Claremont 7708, Cape Town, South Africa and DST/NRF Centre of Excellence at the Percy FitzPatrick Institute, University of Cape Town, Rondebosch 7701, South Africa. Email: michael@birdingafrica.com

Scopus 26: 44–46, January 2007

Received 1 March 2006

First record of Red-footed Booby *Sula sula* and Brown Booby *Sula leucogaster* for Tanzania and other notes from Latham Island (Fungu Mubarak)

On 19–20 November 1993 we visited Latham Island (06°54'S, 39°56'E) as part of our general survey of marine life along the coast of eastern Africa (Richmond 1997). The latest summary of this site is given in Baker & Baker (2002). During our visit we took note of the birds we could identify and photographed those of interest and present here a summary of key observations.

Masked Booby *Sula dactylatra*. An active breeding colony occupied the entire central plateau. We estimated 7000 active nests, with perhaps the majority holding eggs. Regurgitated fish found by some of the nests included flying fish (*Parexocetus* sp.) and juvenile dolphinfish (*Coryphaena hippurus*).

Brown Booby *Sula leucogaster*. At least two birds were present on the eastern edge of the Masked Booby colony. They were photographed and the record has been accepted by the East African Rarities Committee as the first documented for Tanzania.

Red-footed Booby *Sula sula*. At least two birds were present on the



Mills, Michael Stuart Lyne. 2007. "Where does Weyns's weaver *Ploceus weynsi* breed?" *Scopus* 26, 44–46.

View This Item Online: <https://www.biodiversitylibrary.org/item/164182>

Permalink: <https://www.biodiversitylibrary.org/partpdf/140127>

Holding Institution

Natural History Museum Library, London

Sponsored by

Natural History Museum Library, London

Copyright & Reuse

Copyright Status: In copyright. Digitized with the permission of the rights holder.

Rights Holder: Nature Kenya, East Africa Natural History Society

Rights: <https://biodiversitylibrary.org/permissions>

This document was created from content at the **Biodiversity Heritage Library**, the world's largest open access digital library for biodiversity literature and archives. Visit BHL at <https://www.biodiversitylibrary.org>.