

them for safety during the flood. In many of the bushes there were some small snakes and lizards. Most of these reptiles had been taken off by the various birds of prey that were at hand. I shot two of the Cuckoos, but found them useless, as they were in very poor plumage.

39. *CEUTHMOCHARES AUSTRALIS* Sharpe; Shelley, *Ibis*, 1897, p. 545.

I saw several of these birds in the very thick bush, and obtained two or three specimens.

40. *TACHORNIS PARVUS* (Licht.); Hartert, *Cat. B. Brit. Mus.* xvi. p. 463 (1892).

Very common. They roost in the leaves of the borassus palm.

41. *MICROPUS CAFFER* (Licht.); Hartert, *Cat. B. Brit. Mus.* xvi. p. 450 (1892).

Very few seen.

42. *CAPRIMULGUS FOSSII* Hartl.; Shelley, *Ibis*, 1897, p. 543.

a. ♀ ad. Ruo River, August 1898.

This small Nightjar was not widely spread over the district, as I only saw it or heard it at one place, and there I could put up six or eight in a hundred yards when walking through the rough grass and stones. I looked carefully for eggs, but never could find any, although the bird seemed to be in breeding condition.

43. *COSMETORNIS VEXILLARIUS* (Gould); Shelley, *Ibis*, 1894, p. 4.

Numerous among the foot hills of British Central Africa, usually on rocky ground. Males are often found in small flocks of five or six, females always singly. The male bird is easily recognised when flying, even without the long feathers, by the white bar across the wing.

44. *MELITTOPHAGUS ALBIFRONS* (Cab. & Heine); Shelley, *Ibis*, 1894, p. 5.

Common over the whole district. It breeds in colonies along with *Merops natalensis*, but later; while it does not



vanish as does the latter bird. It is usually seen in small parties of five or six.

45. *MELITTOPHAGUS MERIDIONALIS* Sharpe; Shelley, Ibis, 1897, p. 544.

Common, usually seen in pairs.

46. *MEROPS NATALENSIS* Reichenb.; Shelley, Ibis, 1894, p. 4.

*Merops nubicoides* Percival, P. Z. S. 1899, p. 715.

a. Ad. Ruo River, August 1898.

During the months of October and November these birds were numerous on the Ruo and Shiré Rivers, breeding in colonies in the steep banks in company with *M. bullockoides*, which they outnumber by ten to one. Early in December they seemed to vanish almost entirely, and from then till March I did not see more than two or three.

To see the face of a bank covered with these lovely birds, fluttering and clinging to the mouths of their nesting-holes, is a wonderful sight.

On the Ruo, native children snare many of them by setting a noose in the entrance to the nest. In one place I am sure that I saw fifty snares set, and in many of them a bird hanging, dead or dying. The nests are made of the fibres of an aloe. I asked one of the children what they did with the birds: "Eat them, of course," was his answer.

47. *DICROCERCUS HIRUNDINACEUS* (Vieill.); Shelley, Ibis, 1896, p. 230.

Not common, and only once or twice seen in parties of six or eight. It keeps to the trees more than the other species of Bee-eaters.

48. *IRRISOR VIRIDIS* Shelley, Ibis, 1893, p. 8.

Not common, very noisy, and difficult to approach.

49. *RHINOPOMASTUS CYANOMELAS* (Vieill.); Shelley, Ibis, 1897, p. 544.

A few were seen on the Liadzi River, usually in pairs, hunting around dead trees. Very tame.



56. *CERYLE MAXIMA* (Pall.) ; Shelley, Ibis, 1897, p. 544.

Rare. A very few seen.

57. *HALCYON CHELICUTENSIS* (Stanl.) ; Shelley, Ibis, 1897, p. 545.

a. Ad. Shiré River, February 1899.

During July and August these birds were common and very noisy, calling continually ; but later they were scarce.

58. *HALCYON PALLIDIVENTRIS* Cab. ; Percival, P. Z. S. 1899, p. 715.

a. ♂. M'lolo, Chiromo, December 4, 1898.

59. *SCOPS CAPENSIS* Smith ; Sharpe, Cat. B. Brit. Mus. ii. p. 52, pl. iii. fig. 1 (1875).

I know this bird's call well, from hearing it so often in the Transvaal and in Swaziland, where I have shot specimens. In British Central Africa it was often to be heard at dusk, but it is almost impossible to locate the noise, and even if one does so it is by no means easy to see a little Owl in the dusk, for, even during the day, the bird is easily mistaken for the stump of a branch.

60. *GLAUCIDIUM PERLATUM* (Vieill.) ; Shelley, Ibis, 1897, p. 549.

I saw only one specimen of this Owl, in August, among the borassus palms, and it was with great difficulty that I obtained it, for it dropped dead on one of the large leaves of a palm and was not easily dislodged.

61. *ASIO CAPENSIS* (Smith) ; Shelley, Ibis, 1894, p. 465.

On the voyage down the Shiré I saw an Owl, which was, I think, *Asio capensis* : it was flying quietly over the tops of the reeds during the afternoon—just as one sees the bird on the uplands of Natal.

62. *SYRNIUM WOODFORDI* (Smith) ; Shelley, Ibis, 1897, p. 549.

a. ♀ ad. Ruo River, November 26, 1898.

An example of this Owl was obtained on the bank of the Ruo early one morning when my boys had called me to go after a flock of Geese. I did not get a shot at them, but



went up the river in my dugout for a mile or so, and saw the Owl fly into some thick cover on the bank of the river, so went ashore after it. I never saw another in the district.

63. *CIRCUS MACRURUS* (Gm.) ; Sharpe, Cat. B. Brit. Mus. i. p. 67 (1874).<sup>3</sup>

a. ♀ ad. Ruo River, November 23, 1898.

A pair of these Owls were for some days about my camp on the Ruo, near the Zoa Falls. They were very fond of washing, and every day came to the same sandbank in the river to have their bath, sitting in the water for an hour or more.

64. *POLYBOROIDES TYPICUS* Smith ; Shelley, Ibis, 1896, p. 229.

These birds were not uncommon, haunting the river-banks and palm-groves. They worked the palm-groves very carefully, flying from tree to tree, and examining all the leaves, more particularly those that were dead. They sometimes flew to a frond and hung down, alighting at the point, and half climbing, half flying up the frond, looking, I suppose, for small reptiles and shells. They were not easy to shoot, being very wary.

65. *ASTUR POLYZONOIDES* (Smith) ; Shelley, Ibis, 1897, p. 551.

a. Ad. Chiromo, Ruo River, July 30, 1898.

This pretty little Hawk was not uncommon around Chiromo in July, August, and the early part of September. After that time I did not see a single specimen. It is extremely tame and very easy to shoot, feeding mostly on insects and small birds. It is to be found in almost every palm-grove, and if disturbed only flies to the next tree, allowing one to walk right underneath before moving.

66. *ACCIPITER MINULLUS* (Daud.) ; Shelley, Ibis, 1896, p. 177.

A few of these pretty little Hawks are to be seen on the banks of the Ruo, where the thick bush comes down to the water. They seldom venture far thence, and are very



difficult to shoot. I saw one have a long hunt after a Warbler, which was in some cover, too thick for the Hawk to get through. I saw another kill a Weaver-bird.

67. *ASTURINULA MONOGRAMMICA* Temm. ; Shelley, Ibis, 1896, p. 229.

I obtained a very fine female of this Hawk on August 12: it was sitting gorged with termites, and allowed me to walk right up to it. This was just after a shower of rain, and the termites were out in thousands. It is a bird of the thick bush and is seldom seen out of it. I observed some four or five at different times, but always in the thickest cover. When flying away the white rump shews very distinctly.

68. *MACHÆRHAMPHUS ANDERSSONI* (Gurney) ; Sharpe, Cat. B. Brit. Mus. i. p. 343 (1874).

This bird is nocturnal and feeds on bats.

My specimen was obtained one evening in the early part of August, 1898, while I was waiting for Ducks. In flight the bird much resembles a Falcon ; in fact, until it came to hand, I thought that it was one. Its stomach was quite empty, and the bird itself in very poor condition. It was a young male in changing plumage.

One other example was seen near the Shiré River, some twenty-five miles from where I obtained my specimen. I spent almost the whole of one night watching for it, then told my gun-boy to stay, and promised him a reward if he got it; he saw it on the following evening, but did not get a shot. Later he brought me a female *Polyboroides typicus*, which he said was the right bird, and was anxious to have the reward.

I asked my boys the name of the bird and they all said it was Chic'a'babo ; but that name very likely covers several other Hawks as well.

69. *HALIAËTUS VOCIFER* (Daud.) ; Shelley, Ibis, 1897, p. 549.

By no means rare along the Zambesi and the Shiré, breeding both on rocks and in trees.



Sclater, Philip Lutley. 1902. "XXXVIII.—Remarks on Two lately described Australian Birds." *Ibis* 2(4), 608–610.

<https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1474-919x.1902.tb03615.x>.

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