

Birds associating with ungulates.—With reference to the observations by Rice (*Auk*, 80: 196–197, 1963), I would draw attention to that by Brelsford (*Ibis*, 85: 162, 1943), from Chinsali, Northern Rhodesia, of a pair of drongos (*Dicrurus adsimilis*) which used the back of his horse as a perch, from which they hawked for insects disturbed by grazing.

My colleague J. M. C. Uys has reported that, while traveling between Fort Victoria and Enkeldoorn, Southern Rhodesia, on 8 August 1962, on five different occasions he noticed drongos following cattle, catching grasshoppers and other insects disturbed into flight as the cattle grazed. In these instances the drongos did not perch on the cattle, but on bushes nearby.

The following extracts from some observations from Southern Rhodesia by G. W. Parnell in Bulletin 39 (December, 1962) of the Rhodesian Ornithological Society are worth quoting, since this cyclostyled production has only a limited distribution:

Whenever I go to Banket, I have to pass a paddock on a farm where there are usually several horses grazing. Some while ago I noticed a Fork-tailed Drongo [*D. adsimilis*] perched on the withers of a grazing horse. I pulled up to have another look and as I watched, the bird dismounted, collected an insect disturbed by the grazing animal, and remounted. I have seen the bird on each occasion that I have been to Banket during the past few weeks, always on the same mount. Maybe the others object to its feet tickling. It appears as if this drongo has adopted the Cattle Egret's method of following grazing cattle and game for the insects they disturb, and having found an amenable mount, is using him as a means of conveyance, as well as a food disturber. Apart from the oxpeckers which were fairly common around here in the late 20's, I have never seen a bird do an equestrian act before—not even an egret.

During the last 30 years, spent mostly in Northern Rhodesia and Nyasaland, where the drongo is very common, I have never noticed any such association myself.

With regard to birds associating with the hippopotamus, attention should also be drawn to the notes by Benson (*Bull. Brit. Orn. Cl.*, 81: 85, 1961, and footnote in 82: 22, 1962) and by Pitman (*Bull. Brit. Orn. Cl.*, 81: 148, 1961, and 82: 100–101, 1962). In this final reference there is also a record of association between the jacana (*Actophilornis africanus*) and a young elephant.—CONSTANTINE W. BENSON, *Rhodes-Livingstone Museum, P. O. Box 124, Livingstone, Northern Rhodesia.*

Birds associated with elephants and hippopotamuses.—Dale W. Rice (*Auk*, 80: 196–197, 1963) draws attention to this subject, on which African textbooks are perhaps unduly reticent. The association of the Piapiac, *Ptilostomus afer*, with elephants is in fact well known, in the limited area in which both are found; and it has been remarked that the habit is the more striking because elephants are not frequented by oxpeckers, *Buphagus* spp. It is nicely illustrated by a recently published photograph showing one Piapiac on the elephant's head and another at its feet (C. A. Spinage, *Animals of East Africa*, London, 1962). In west Africa, on the other hand, the Piapiac is common but elephants and most other large wild mammals are sadly lacking, so the familiar association is with domestic stock.

A long list could doubtless be compiled of birds that commonly stand on partly submerged hippopotamuses; R. Meinertzhagen gives a good many instances without being exhaustive (*Pirates and predators*, London, 1959). A photograph that I took in Uganda last winter shows Common Sandpiper, *Actitis hypoleucos*, and Hammerhead, *Scopus umbretta*, on the backs of adjacent animals in a wallow, a not uncommon sight.—A. LANDBOROUGH THOMSON, 42 Girdwood Road, Southfields, London, S.W. 18.