

Some observations of waders and other wetland birds from the Ivory Coast

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INTRODUCTION

During the period November 1990 to February 1991, we visited a number of wetland or riverine sites in the Ivory Coast (République de Côte d'Ivoire), during the course of a survey of forest birds in Taï National Park (Gartshore *et al.* in prep.). Our observations of waders and other wetland birds are summarised below.

SITE DETAILS

One site lies on the coast, four in the south-west forested part of the country and two in central or north-eastern parts, transitional to or located within savanna vegetation (Figure 1).

Monogaga (4°49'N, 6°25'W)

Located on the Atlantic Coast 20 km east of San Pedro. A small area of sandy beaches with a brackish lagoon, surrounded by forest. Visited 21 November 1990.

Buyo Reservoir

A very large reservoir, covering several hundred km², created for hydro-electric power generation by flooding an area of tropical rainforest. All of the reservoir has dead, burnt tree trunks sticking out of the water, with carpets of aquatic vegetation beneath, including much water hyacinth *Eichornia crassipes*. Three areas were visited: the dam wall at the Sassandra River (6°15'N, 7°05'W; 22 November 1990), the shoreline within the Réserve de faune du N'zo (6°13'N, 7°12'W; 23 November 1990), where the reservoir is surrounded by forest, and near the road bridge at Guessabo (6°45'N, 7°00'W; 7 January 1991).

Cavally River (5°50'N, 7°25'W)

This large river forms the border with Liberia and is fringed by degraded forest. There are several areas of rapids. A point near Tai village was visited on 2 December 1990 and 7 February 1991.

Parc Nationale de Marahoué (7°09'N, 5°53'W)

The river Bandama, which forms the park boundary, was visited on 8 January 1991. It is fringed by gallery forest.

Parc Nationale de Comoé (around 8°55'N, 3°50'W)

Several stretches of the Comoé river in this area were visited from 16 to 18 January 1991. This wide river is also fringed by gallery forest.

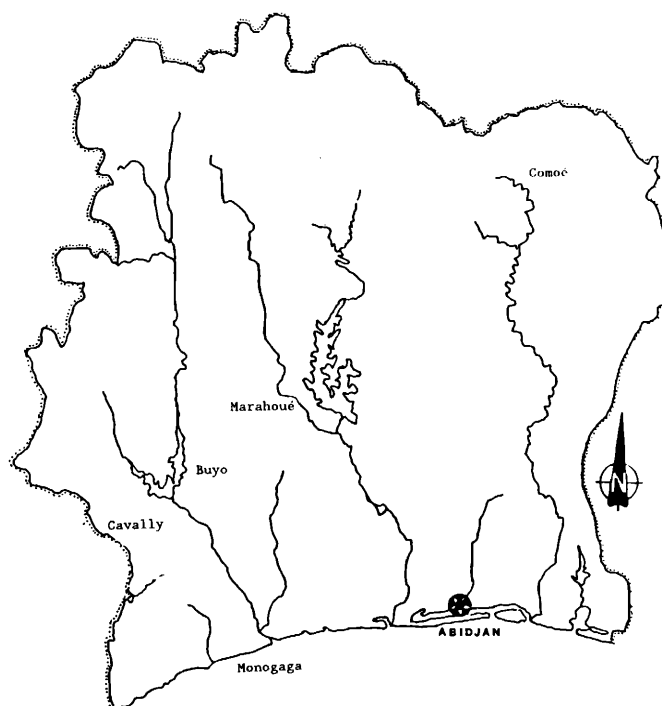


Figure 1. Map of Ivory Coast, showing areas visited.

SPECIES NOTED

Table 1 summarises our sightings, together with numbers counted.

Table 1. Waders and wetland birds seen at wetland sites in Ivory Coast. Order and nomenclature follows Serle & Morel (1977). A simple cross indicates present but not counted. Sites are abbreviated, in the order described above.

| SPECIES | Monogaga | Buyo Dam | Reservoir Guessabo | Reservoir N'zo | Cavally R. December | Cavally R. February | Parc Natl. de Marahoué | Parc Natl. de Comoé |
|-------------------------------|----------|-------------|-----------------------|-------------------|------------------------|------------------------|---------------------------|------------------------|
| <i>Nycticorax nycticorax</i> | | | + | 5 | | | | |
| <i>Ardeola ralloides</i> | | | + | 1 | | | | |
| <i>Ardeola ibis</i> | | | | 2 | | | | |
| <i>Butorides striatus</i> | | | + | 6 | | | | |
| <i>Egretta ardesiaca</i> | | | + | 1 | | | | |
| <i>Egretta alba</i> | | | | 1 | | | | |
| <i>Egretta intermedia</i> | | | + | | | | | |
| <i>Egretta garzetta</i> | 9 | + | + | 10 | | | | |
| <i>Egretta gularis</i> | | | | 1 | | | | |
| <i>Ardea cinerea</i> | 5 | + | + | 6 | | | | 1 |
| <i>Ardea melanocephala</i> | | | + | | | | | |
| <i>Ardea goliath</i> | | | | | | | | 1 |
| <i>Ardea purpurea</i> | | | + | 3 | | | | |
| <i>Ciconia episcopus</i> | | | | 2 | | | | |
| <i>Bostrychia hagedash</i> | | | | 1 | | | | |
| <i>Pteronetta hartlaubii</i> | | | | 6 | | | | |
| <i>Nettapus auritus</i> | | | 2 | | | | | |
| <i>Limnocolax flavirostra</i> | | + | + | 2 | | | | |
| <i>Sarothrura pulchra</i> | | 1 | | 2 | | | | |
| <i>Podica senegalensis</i> | | | | | | | | 3 |
| <i>Actophilornis africana</i> | | + | 6 | 6 | | | 2 | 2 |
| <i>Burhinus senegalensis</i> | | | | | | | | 2 |
| <i>Vanellus spinosus</i> | | | 4 | | | | | |
| <i>Vanellus albiceps</i> | | | 2 | | 2 | 2 | | 8 |
| <i>Vanellus senegallus</i> | | | | | | | | |
| <i>Charadrius hiaticula</i> | 1 | | | | | | | |
| <i>Charadrius dubius</i> | | + | | 1 | | | | 1 |
| <i>Charadrius torbesi</i> | | | | | | | | 1 |
| <i>Numenius phaeopus</i> | 6 | | | | | | | |
| <i>Numenius arquata</i> | 2 | | | | | | | |
| <i>Limosa lapponica</i> | 2 | | | | | | | |
| <i>Tringa nebularia</i> | 1 | | | | | | | |
| <i>Tringa glareola</i> | | | | 1 | | | | 1 |
| <i>Tringa ochropus</i> | | + | | | 1 | | | 1 |
| <i>Tringa hypoleucos</i> | 12 | | 3 | 1 | 2 | 3 | 3 | 4 |
| <i>Tringa totanus</i> | 1 | | | | | | | |
| <i>Himantopus himantopus</i> | | 2 | 1 | | | | | |
| <i>Glareola nuchalis</i> | | 35 | | | 12 | 7 | | |

CONCLUSIONS

Although our records consist only of opportunistic observations, and generally small numbers of birds were encountered, they are likely to be useful as contributions to the study of the winter distribution of Palaearctic migrant waders, as well as to the collation of records for specific sites, given the low number of observers in the Ivory Coast. There are almost no other published accounts of wetland birds in the country which deal with the sites we visited; those which are published relate to single species records at one or two of the sites (e.g. Walsh 1986; Balchin 1988) or to inland records of *Egretta gularis* (Walsh 1987), which we noted once at N'zo. Some of the sites we visited may be of considerable importance to migrant and wintering waders, particularly the long, wide, north-south flowing rivers such as the Sassandra and Comoé, which could hold, for example, a significant number of Common Sandpipers *Tringa hypoleucos*. The Buyo reservoir too is a vast wetland, containing much

feeding habitat and also nesting sites for herons and egrets. Of the sites visited, only the two national parks have any protected status. Both the rivers and the Buyo reservoir would benefit from a fuller survey in future years.

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