

The birds of Keiskama Hoek,
Division of King William's Town Cape Colony
by
E. W. Clifton.

Keiskama Hoek
Division of King William's Town
Cape Colony.

May 31st 1887.

In forwarding ornithological notes, made during the past twelve months, of this place and neighbourhood — I have thought it well to found such notes on a nominal list of the Birds therein observed, and I have for the present restricted the said list to a radius of about two and a half miles in every direction, taking the village itself as a centre. I have done this because there is undoubtedly a natural line drawn between the Birds observable in the circuit mentioned, and those of the more wooded and upland regions surrounding. The sphere of observation which lies at an elevation of about 3000 ft. above sea-level consists of a gently undulating grassy veldt with bush (chiefly mimosa) here and there, and marshy ground near the small rivers Keiskama and Yxulu which together nearly encircle the area. The river banks bear larger trees, yellow wood, red pear, willow etc.; and the village itself contains fruit trees of various kinds (apricot, apple, quince, orange, lemon ect. and vines). Surrounding the area are parts of the Amatola and Perie ranges highest towards the west and north, and more or less covered with fruit of species common to the Cape Colony. The climate is that of Kaffraria generally, temperate with seasons of great drought alter-

nating with plenteous rains, the vegetation varying accordingly. The last year has been one of plentiful rain-fall after three of deficient supply. The lowest-lying ground near the river is subject to not very severe frost at intervals between April and August. The arrangement followed in the List of Birds is that of the work on S. African Birds by Layard and Sharpe. A large number of families are represented, giving hopes that, though the array of species recognized is not great, it may hereafter be lengthened. I have named none which I have not myself seen, or made as sure as possible that I have seen and where doubt has existed I have affixed a note of query.

I am, Sir

Yours truly

E. F. Clifton, M. D.

Order — *Accipitres*.

Popular name, remarks, etc.

Family — *Falconidae*.

Serpentarius secretarius, Secretary Bird.

Occasional — only in isolated pairs.

Circus macrurus, Pallid Harrier.

Frequent — "Amakweta" hawk.

Circus ranivorus, S. A. Marsh Harrier.

Accipiter rufiventris, S. A. Sparrow Hawk.

Buteo jakal, Jackal Buzzard.

Frequent.

Cerchneis rupicola, S. A. Kestrel.

Family — *Bubonidae*.

Bubo maculosus. — Spotted eagle owl.

Asio capensis. — Short eared owl.

Strix flammea. — Barn owl.

Order — *Picariae*.

Popular names, remarks, etc.

Family — *Caprimulgidae*.

C. rufigena. — Rufous checked night jar.

Most frequent in and near village.

Family — *Cypselidae*.

C. apus. — Common swift.

C. caffer. — S. A. white rumped swift.

Family — *Alcedinidae*.

A. semitorquata. — Half colored kingfisher.

Frequent, by river.

Halcyon albiventris. — Brown hooded kingfisher.

Constantly in gardens, etc., feeding on grasshoppers and similar insects.

Family — *Bucerotidae*.

Bucorax caffer. — S. A. Ground Hornbill.

»Wild Turkey«. On veldt or cultivated ground feeding on lizards etc.

Tockus erythrorhynchus. — Red-billed Hornbill.

Occasional garden visitor, eating fruit.

Family — *Upupidae*.

U. africana. — S. A. Hoopoe.

Occasional, among mimosa bush.

Family — *Musophagidae*.

Corythaix musophaga. — White crested plantain eater.

»Lory«. Seen only where fruit flinges the area—unable to fly far, caught by being driven from bush on to open veldt.

Family — *Cuculidae*.

Chrysococcyx cupreus. — Golden cuckoo.

Near forest, occasional.

Family — *Picidae*.

Dendropicus cardinalis. — Cardinal Woodpecker.

Scarce. Near edge of forest.

Order — *Psittaci*.

Popular names, remarks, etc.

Family — *Psittacidae*.

P. fuscicollis. — Brown-necked parrot. Ventures from forest, when wild fruits are ripe.

Order — *Passeres*.Family — *Turdidae*.

T. olivaceus. — Olivaceous thrush. Frequent. Garden fruit eater.

Pycnonotus tricolor. — Black eyebrowed Bulbul. Common. Garden fruit eater. »Knife-Rop«.

Cossypha caffra. — Cape Chat thrush.

Cisticola tinniens. — Le Vaillant's fantail-Warbler.

Cisticola cursitans. — Common fantail Warbler.

Acrocephalus boeticatus. — S. A. Reed warbler.

Family — *Nectarinidae*.

N. famosa. — Malachite sun bird.

Cinnyris chalybaeus. — Little double collared sun bird.

C. amethystinus. — Amethyst sun bird.

Frequent. — Gardens.

Family — *Paridae*.

Zosterops capensis. — Cape White eye. Common in Gardens from November to March, then disappearing. Most destructive to fruit.

Family — *Muscicapidae*.

M. undulata. — Dusky-grey fly-catcher.

Family — *Hirundinidae.*

Popular names, remarks, etc.

H. rustica. — European swallow.

H. albigularis. — White-throated swallow.

H. cucullata. — Larger striped breasted swallow.

Frequent.

Common.

Frequent.

From early September to April. Individuals of all three species remain here all the winter, and may be seen on fine days. But the date of arrival last year (1886) was September 8th after which they became numerous.

Family — *Laniidae.*

Lanius collaris. — Fiskal shrike.

Common — but each pair keeping a certain area for themselves. Very destructive to smaller birds, attacking and killing even the Bulbul.

Laniarius gutturalis. — Backbakiri bush shrike.

Common.

Family — *Dicruridae.*

Buchanga assimilis. — African Drongo.

Frequent.

Family — *Oriolidae.*

O. larvatus. — S. A. black-headed Oriole.

Family — *Corvidae.*

Heterocorax capensis. — African rook.

Frequent. Building in gum and other high trees in August. Gregarious.

Corvultur albicollis. — White-necked raven.

Frequent — but in solitary pairs.

Family — <i>Sturnidae</i> .	Popular names, remarks, etc.
<i>Lamprocolius phoenicopterus</i> .	»Red winged Gpuo«.
— Red shouldered glossy starling.	Fruit eater. Common.
? <i>L. sycobius</i> . — Peters glossy starling.	
<i>Amydrus morio</i> . — Cape glossy starling.	Common. More on veldt than in gardens.
Family — <i>Ploceidae</i> .	
<i>Hyphanturgus olivaceus</i> . — Olive and yellow weaver bird.	Common — but migrating from one part of neighbourhood to another and returning at intervals.
<i>Hyphantornis spilonotus</i> . — Spotted backed weaver bird.	Frequent. »Fink«.
? <i>Sycobrotus bicolor</i> . — Black-backed weaver bird.	
<i>Vidua principalis</i> . — Com. widow-bird.	Frequent.
<i>V. ardens</i> . — Red collared widow-bird.	
<i>Chera progne</i> . — Long tailed widow-bird.	»Kaffir fink«.
<i>Pyromelana capensis</i> . — Black and yellow bishop bird.	Only in marshy places.
<i>Estrela astrild</i> . — Com. wax bill.	Frequent.
<i>E. incana</i> . — S. A. grey wax bill.	Scarce.
Family — <i>Fringillidae</i> .	
<i>Crithagra butyracea</i> . — Com. seed eater.	
<i>Serinus canicollis</i> . — Cape canary.	Common.
<i>S. tottus</i> . — Brown Cape canary.	Frequent.
Family — <i>Emberizidae</i> .	
<i>Fringillaria capensis</i> . — Cape Bunting.	Common. »Stryp-koppy«.

Family — *Alaudidae*. Popular names, remarks, etc.

Tephrocorys cinerea. — Rufous capped lark. Frequent — on veldt.

Family — *Motacillidae*.

M. capensis. — Cape wag-tail. Frequent — near houses.

Family — *Coliidae*.

Colius striatus. — S. A. Coly. »Mouse bird«. Moderate fruit eater.

Order — *Columbae*.

Family — *Columbidae*.

C. phaeonota. — S. A. speckled Pigeon. »Bush Dove«. Common.

Palumbus arquatrix. — Kameron Pigeon.

Turtur capicola. — Cape turtle-dove.

Oena capensis. — Long tailed African dove. Frequent among Mimosa bush.

Chalcopelia afra. — Emerald spotted wood dove.

Order — *Gallinae*.

Family — *Perdidae*.

Coturnix coturnix. — Common quail. Migratory — but a few always remaining. Very plentiful last two years, nests in corn fields or long grass.

Order — *Limicolae*.

Family — *Glareolidae*.

G. melanoptera. — Black winged pratincole. »Small trout bird«. Very common last year, when locusts etc. were numerous, but this year remaining only a few days.

Popular names, remarks, etc.

- Order — *Herodiones*.
 Family — *Ardeidae*.
Botaurus stellaris. — Com. One specimen only seen, close to village. »Rain-bird« of Kaffirs.
 bittern. Frequent.
Ardea cinerea. — Grey heron. A brown and olive species, of size of *A. cinerea*, not identified.
 ? *Ardea* —
 Family — *Scopidae*.
Scopus umbretta. — Hammer- »Hammer-kop«. Frequent. Marshy places.
 head.
 Family — *Ciconiidae*.
Ciconia alba. — White stork. »Great locust bird«. Usually common, but less to this year, insect food being scarce. The first was seen on Dec. 4th (unusually late), on Dec. 10th there were a large number to be seen; the last seen was on Feb. 16. 1887.
 Order — *Anseres*.
 Family — *Anatidae*.
Anas xanthorhyncha. — Yellow billed Teal. Now scarce. Formerly plentiful.

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