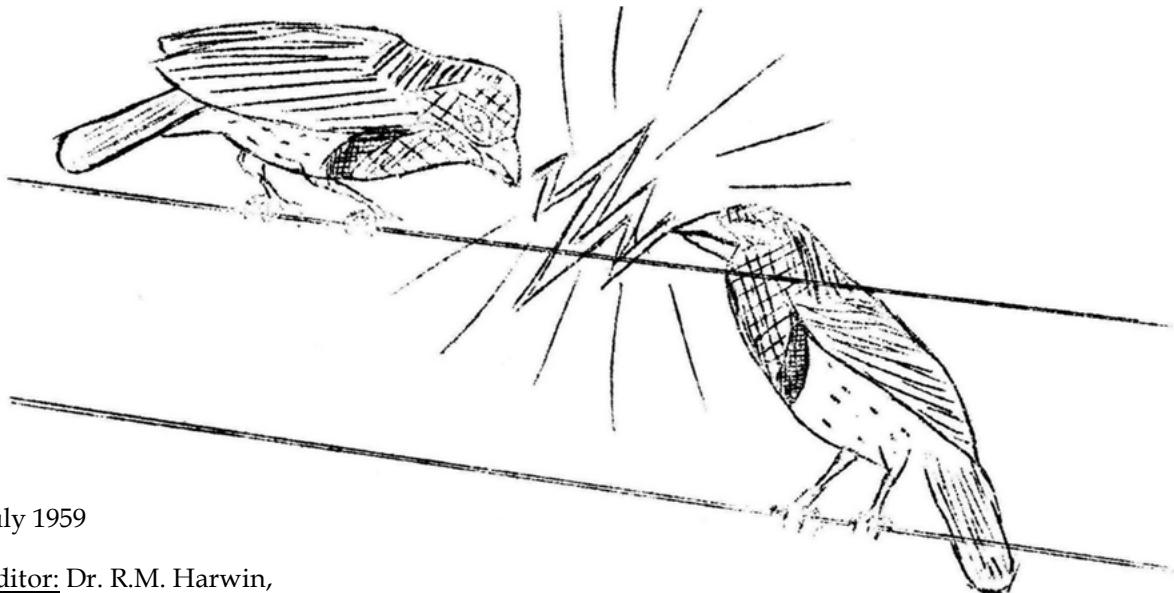


Rhodesian Ornithological Society

Bulletin No. 28



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Editor: Dr. R.M. Harwin,
P.O. Box 647, Gwelo.

Captain R.A. Bourlai has related an occurrence, involving a rather tragic end which eclipses the disaster from hail about which Mr. Linton wrote in *Bulletin* No. 27, although fortunately, fewer birds were involved. It involves the bobbing display of the Black-collared Barbet. Several times a pair of barbets has performed this display on power lines near his home, with the result that if they approach too closely, there is a short circuit, a bang; the power supply has failed, and the pathetic remains of a pair of barbets have been left either hanging from the wires or on the ground below. Captain Bourlai says that this has now happened four times, the victims being Black-collared Barbets on three occasions and once Sowerby's Barbets [Whyte's Barbet].

By a coincidence, shortly after hearing about the above, I was informed of a similar incident by Mrs. Snell. This time it involved a fiscal shrike [Common Fiscal] feeding its young. The parent was perched on one cable with the young on a parallel one below. The former presented the youngster with an insect, and as their beaks met, they were both electrocuted by a current of 400 volts. The young bird fell to the ground while the parent remained hanging by one foot, the insect still in its beak.

The Centenary Celebrations of the BOU

The following account has been received from Mr. Smithers who was present:

Friday the 20th March 1959 brought together in Cambridge a great concourse of ornithologists from all parts of the world to celebrate the centenary of the BOU. Three and a half days were spent in the presentation and discussion of papers, the evening of the first day on reports by the leaders of the Centenary Expeditions to the Comoro Islands (Mr. C.W. Benson) and Ascension Island (Dr. J.M. Cullen). Mr. Benson showed some excellent films of the Islands, and Dr. Cullen a series of coloured slides, which gave a good idea of the terrain of these two inaccessible areas.

Professor E. Mayr of Harvard was one of the outstanding and stimulating speakers, and with Sir Julian Huxley, he took a regular part in the discussion following papers. These covered a wide field, including Systematics, Behaviour, Migration and Orientation, Ecology, Breeding Biology and Physiology. One point brought home very well by certain of the papers, was how valuable a contribution a layman within his own ecological niche can make to such subjects as population

ecology. An excellent example was a paper by D. Summers-Smith on the House Sparrow, a notable contribution made with the aid of colour-banding and within the compass of a few suburban blocks. Reluctantly taking our leave of Cambridge on Monday 23rd, the delegates, reinforced with many guests, assembled at the Fishmongers' Hall in London for dinner that evening. The surroundings were particularly grand, and the Hall must have seated some 250 persons. When the toasts were introduced, the assembled company was called to order by a Major-domo in scarlet uniform, who sang his introductions in a deep bass voice.

Rhodesians present were C.W. Benson, Mrs. Benson, R.W. Rankine and R.H.N. Smithers. Delegates whom Rhodesians may know were R.E. Moreau, C.W. Mackworth-Praed, Mrs. P. Hall, Miss Ackland, Col. Meinerthagen and Prof. Berlioz, Dr. Dorst and M. Etchecopar of Paris.

The Meeting slowly broke up after the toast to "absent Ibises" which is traditionally taken sitting.

BIRD PROTECTION IN SOUTHERN RHODESIA

I am indebted to Mr. Richard Brooke for the following account. The relevant legislation, the Game and Fish Preservation Act (Chapter 187) and Governor's Proclamation No. 134 of 1953 as amended by No. 4 of 1955, is under review, and suggestions from members which could be put by the Society to the Game Dept., would be welcome.

A. National Parks

There are 13 National Parks of various sizes in Southern Rhodesia. List A gives those Parks which have one or more resident European Staff members and List B those without. Permission to hunt birds is normally never given in a National Park, though National Parks Staff may have to hunt birds in the course of their official duties.

List A

Ewanrigg	Robert McIlwaine Park
Manchester Park (in the Vumba Mountains)	Sinoia Caves
Matopos	Victoria Falls
Mushandike Dam (near Fort Victoria)	Wankie [Hwange]
Rhodes Inyanga	Zimbabwe

List B

Chimanimani Mountains
Ngezi Dam (between Gatooma and Que Que, on the Great Dyke)
Sebakwe Poort Dam (near Que Que, on the Great Dyke)

B. Legislation

No species of bird except those listed below may be hunted, trapped or molested without a special permit from the Game Department. This permit is normally issued on the recommendation of the Director of the National Museum.

The listed birds may be hunted etc. on privately owned ground. The permission of the owner must be obtained, and in the area of jurisdiction of a municipality, the permission of the municipality as well. A Native Commissioner may give permission to hunt listed birds in a Native Reserve under his charge. The Game Department may give similar permission for Crown Land.

The relevant Game Licence must also be held to shoot listed members of families 1 to 6 and 23, which are game birds. All birds not listed below are protected.

1. Guinea Fowl – Family Numididae

Crowned Guinea Fowl [Helmeted Guineafowl] – *Numida mitrata*

2. Francolin and Quail – Family Phasianidae

Swempie [Coqui Francolin] – *Francolinus coqui*

Crested Francolin – *Francolinus sephaena*

Shelley's Francolin – *Francolinus shelleyi*

Natal Francolin [Natal Spurfowl] – *Francolinus natalensis*

Humboldt's Francolin [Red-necked Spurfowl] – *Pternistis afer*

Swainson's Francolin [Swainson's Spurfowl] – *Pternistis swainsoni*

Delegorgue's Harlequin Quail – *Coturnix delegorguei*

3. **Sandgrouse – Family Pteroclidae**
Double-banded Sandgrouse – *Pterocles bicinctus*
Yellow-throated Sandgrouse – *Pterocles gutturalis*
Ngami Sandgrouse [Namaqua Sandgrouse] – *Pterocles namaquus*
4. **Ducks and Geese – Family Anatidae**
White-faced Duck – *Dendrocygna viduata*
Fulvous Duck – *Dendrocygna bicolor*
Egyptian Goose – *Alopochen aegyptiaca*
Yellow-billed Duck – *Anas undulata*
African Black Duck – *Anas sparsa*
Cape Wigeon [Cape Teal] – *Anas capensis*
Hottentot Teal – *Anas punctata*
Red-billed Teal – *Anas erythrorhyncha*
Garganey – *Anas querquedula*
Northern Shoveler – *Spatula clypeata*
Cape Shoveler – *Spatula capensis*
South African Pochard [Southern Pochard] – *Netta erythrophthalma*
Knob-billed Duck [Comb Duck] – *Sarkidiornis melanotos*
Spur-winged Goose – *Plectropterus gambensis*
Maccoa Duck – *Oxyura jamaicensis*
White-backed Duck – *Thalassornis leuconotus*
5. **Painted Snipe – Family Rostratulidae**
Painted Snipe [Greater Painted-snipe] – *Rostratula benghalensis*
6. **Snipe – Family Scolopacidae**
Double Snipe [Great Snipe] – *Capella media*
Ethiopian Snipe [African Snipe] – *Capella nigripennis*
7. **Eagles and Hawks – Family Accipitidae**
Tawny Eagle – *Aquila rapax*
Martial Eagle – *Polemaetus bellicosus*
African Hawk-eagle – *Hieraetus fasciata*
Little Sparrowhawk – *Accipiter minullus*
Black Sparrowhawk – *Accipiter melanoleucus*
African Goshawk – *Accipiter badius*
8. **Crows – Family Corvidae**
Pied Crow – *Corvus albus*
Black Crow [Cape Crow] – *Corvus capensis*
9. **Cormorants – Family Phalacrocoracidae**
Reed Cormorant – *Phalacrocorax africanus*
White-breasted Cormorant – *Phalacrocorax carbo*
10. **Darters – Family Anhingidae**
African Darter – *Anhinga rufa*
11. **Kingfishers – Family Alcedinidae**
Giant Kingfisher – *Megaceryle maxima*
Pied Kingfisher – *Ceryle rudis*
12. **Pigeons and Doves – Family Columbidae**
Rock Pigeon [Speckled Pigeon] – *Columba guinea*
Red-eyed Dove – *Streptopelia semitorquata*
Ring-necked Dove [Cape Turtle-dove] – *Streptopelia capicola*
Laughing Dove – *Stigmatopelia senegalensis*
Green Pigeon [African Green-pigeon] – *Treron calva*
13. **Mousebirds – Family Coliidae**
Speckled Mousebird – *Colius striatus*
Red-faced Mousebird – *Colius indicus*
14. **Bulbs – Family Pycnonotidae**
Bulbul [Dark-capped Bulbul] – *Pycnonotus xanthopygos*
15. **Turacos – Family Musophagidae**
Grey Go-away-bird – *Corythaixoides concolor*
16. **Shrikes – Family Laniidae**
Common Fiscal Shrike – *Lanius collaris*

17. **Starlings — Family Sturnidae**
 Red-shouldered Glossy Starling [Cape Glossy Starling] — *Lamprocolius nitens*
 Blue-eared Glossy Starling [Greater Blue-eared Starling] — *Lamprocolius chalybaeus*
 East African Blue-eared Glossy Starling [Miombo Blue-eared Starling] — *Lamprocolius chloropterus*
 Red-winged Starling — *Onychognathus morio*
18. **Weavers — Family Ploceidae**
 Masked Weaver [Southern Masked-weaver] — *Ploceus velatus*
 Spotted-backed Weaver [Village Weaver] — *Ploceus spilonotus*
 Black-headed Weaver [=Village Weaver] — *Ploceus nigriceps*
 Red-billed Quelea — *Quelea quelea*
 Southern Red Bishop — *Euplectes orix*
 Yellow Bishop — *Euplectes capensis*
19. **Waxbills — Family Ploceidae**
 Hooded Mannikin [Bronze Mannikin] — *Spermestes cucullata*
 Red-backed Mannikin — *Spermestes bicolor*
 Blue Waxbill — *Uraeginthus angolensis*
20. **Cuckoo Weavers — Family Ploceidae**
 Pin-tailed Widow Bird or King of Six [Pin-tailed Whydah] — *Vidua macroura*
 Shaft-tailed Widow Bird [Shaft-tailed Whydah] — *Vidua regia*
21. **Sparrows — Family Passeridae**
 English Sparrow [House Sparrow] — *Passer domesticus*
 Grey-headed Sparrow — *Passer griseus*
 Yellow-throated Sparrow [Yellow-throated Petronia] — *Petronia superciliaris*
22. **Canaries and Seed-Eaters — Family Fringillidae**
 Yellow-eye Canary [Yellow-fronted Canary] — *Serinus mozambica*
 Bully Canary [Brimstone Canary] — *Serinus sulphurata*
 Streaky-headed Seedeater — *Poliospiza gularis*
 Black-eared Seedeater — *Poliospiza mennelli*
 Yellow-rumped Seedeater [Black-throated Canary] — *Poliospiza atrogularis*
23. **Ostrich — Family Struthionidae**
 Common Ostrich — *Struthio australis*

ANTING

My inquiry in *Bulletin* No 25 concerning anting brought no response at the time. Mr. P. Linton has sent me a review of Dr. L. Burton's book *Phoenix Re-born* in which the subject is quite thoroughly gone into. Anyone interested should of course read the book for himself; Mr. Linton wonders if anting is akin to a dog's delight in rolling in carrion.

Since *Bulletin* No. 25 appeared, too, I have come across one record of anting by a bird occurring in Rhodesia. In the *Ostrich* Vol. XV page 134, Sept. 1944, Mr. H. Millar describes what would be called "passive" anting by the Green Twinspot *Mandingoa nitidula*, but does not use the term "anting" at all.

Red-winged Starlings Mrs. M.L. Snell writes: Red-winged Starlings have been much in evidence round our house for about three years. It was decided to eliminate a nest in the roof which was causing trouble, and it was therefore removed on Dec. 20th. It was formed of an outer layer of the stems of Jacaranda leaves. Inside that was a layer of pine needles, and inside that a lining of horse hairs. The four eggs were blue, spotted and blotched with purple-brown.

Incidentally the Starlings, although surrounded by mulberries, youngberries, strawberries and other fruit, consumed large quantities of insects, and were in particular observed eating the objectionable rose beetles and the large black millipedes which they first broke into small sections on the roof or the paved path. They appeared to be afraid of nobody, and I considered them fairly safe from natural enemies, but one night I went out of the house with a torch and nearly fell over a Spotted Eagle-owl eating a Red-winged Starling on the lawn. There was not much left except the wings.

Sanderling Mr. W.H. Houston records a Sanderling on a small muddy pool close to a dam on the Salisbury—Mazoe Road. He says "I know this bird well in northeast Scotland, and at first sight from some distance I said to myself "Sanderling". This was confirmed when I got close by the short black bill, its generally pale appearance, and most of all the short clockwork legs as it runs about. I put it up to see the wing pattern. A white wing bar was evident