

THE RED-CHESTED CUCKOO *CUCULUS SOLITARIUS* IN COASTAL TANZANIA The Red-chested Cuckoo *Cuculus solitarius* appears to be a highland species in East Africa which has not been collected from the coastal strip, the nearest records given by Snow (1978) being from the Usambaras and Ulugurus. The same author notes that in southern Africa the species is a breeding migrant, spending the non-breeding season at lower latitudes, and Britton (in press) states that it visits coastal southeastern Tanzania between October and April.

The following records of the species are available from the Dar es Salaam area; all are based on the loud, distinctive, three-syllable call. In January 1969 one of us (KMH) heard the call from secondary scrub and suburban gardens. On 10 January 1978, KMH and CAM heard a bird call from a neglected cashew-nut plantation near Ruvu South Forest Reserve, Kisarawe District, approximately 20 km southwest of Dar es Salaam. Most recently, SNS heard a bird calling in suburban gardens during heavy rain at Dar es Salaam on 13 February 1980.

The records of Fuggles-Couchman (1939) for the species from coastal Tanzania appear to have been overlooked by later authors. However, there has certainly been a change in the status of this species since his observations, as he noted (p.82) 'The bird is very common in the [Eastern] province both on the coast and inland in orchard-bush'. KMH and CAM have lived in Dar es Salaam since 1968 and 1971 respectively. All three of us are familiar with the call of the Red-chested Cuckoo, having heard it elsewhere at higher altitudes. We feel it is unlikely that a species with such a loud, noticeable call would have been overlooked by us or by other observers over the last decade.

Mackworth-Praed & Grant (1960) note breeding records in Tanzania from October to March. There is no direct evidence that the birds at Dar es Salaam were breeding. It is of interest that Britton (1977) has documented the occurrence on the Kenya coast of the Barred Long-tailed Cuckoo *Cercococcyx montanus*, a species previously thought to be restricted to montane forest.

#### REFERENCES

BRITTON, P.L. 1977. A Kenya record of *Cercococcyx montanus* at sea-level. *Scopus* 1: 23-24.

————— (ed.) in press. *Birds of East Africa*. Nairobi: EANHs.

FUGGLES-COUCHMAN, N.R. 1939. Notes on some birds of the Eastern Province of Tanganyika Territory. *Ibis* 1939: 76-106.

SNOW, D.W. (ed.) 1978. *An atlas of speciation in African non-passerine birds*. London: British Museum (Nat. Hist.).

K.M. Howell and C.A. Msuya, Department of Zoology, University of Dar es Salaam, Box 35064, Dar es Salaam, Tanzania and S.N. Stuart, c/o Box 44, Soni, Tanzania  
*Scopus* 4: 44, June 1980

Received 14 March 1980

NOTES ON FEEDING HABITS OF PIED AND INDIAN HOUSE CROWS *CORVUS ALBUS* AND *SPLENDENS* Pied Crows *Corvus albus* and Indian House Crows *C. splendens* are abundant in and around Dar es Salaam. The House Crows have gradually increased in numbers on the mainland since 1968 when they were scarce; the increase has been especially noticeable since 1973 (K.M. Howell, pers. comm.). Both species occur at Kunduchi on the coast 25 km north of Dar. They are opportunists, feeding largely on scraps from Kunduchi Beach Hotel (and other nearby hotels) and on local rubbish dumps, and they also scavenge on the beach, feeding on carcasses or remnants of turtles, fish and molluscs. Although usually seen in small numbers, concentrations of 30 to 40 Pied (or House) Crows are often seen.

Goodwin (1976) summarized food items and feeding behaviour of the two species but he did not mention House Crows feeding with domestic stock in the manner of Cattle Egrets *Bubulcus ibis* or Yellow Wagtails *Motacilla flava*. On 8 September

*Scopus* 4: 44-45, June 1980





Howell, K M and Msuya, C A. 1980. "The red-chested cuckoo *Cuculus solitarius* in coastal Tanzania." *Scopus* 4, 44-44.

**View This Item Online:** <https://www.biodiversitylibrary.org/item/137798>

**Permalink:** <https://www.biodiversitylibrary.org/partpdf/118446>

**Holding Institution**

Harvard University, Museum of Comparative Zoology, Ernst Mayr Library

**Sponsored by**

Harvard University, Museum of Comparative Zoology, Ernst Mayr Library

**Copyright & Reuse**

Copyright Status: In copyright. Digitized with the permission of the rights holder.

License: <http://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-nc-sa/3.0/>

Rights: <https://biodiversitylibrary.org/permissions>

This document was created from content at the **Biodiversity Heritage Library**, the world's largest open access digital library for biodiversity literature and archives. Visit BHL at <https://www.biodiversitylibrary.org>.