

Starlings *Spreo superbus* were perched in the same tree and within the same binocular field.

Nowhere in the East African bird literature, nor in Brown & Amadon (1968) do I find reference to a yellow eye-ring in Dickinson's Kestrel. Nor does the plate in Mackworth-Praed & Grant (1957) depict one. However, these authors' West African handbook (1970) states "ring round eye yellow". Lighton's plate in McLachlan & Liversidge (1957) shows some yellow, and the colour photograph following p. 160 in Grossman & Hamlet (1964) clearly displays a bare, yellow orbital ring, very broad anterior to the eye as in the individual we observed.

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MASCARENE MARTINS IN KENYA At 10:30 hrs on the misty, overcast morning of 24 June 1978, I observed a flock of 16 Mascarene Martins *Phedina borbonica* at Lake Jipe in southeastern Kenya on the Tanzania border. Other observers included Marian Zimmerman (who, together with me had previously seen this species in Madagascar), John Minot, Christopher Parrish and Eugene Kenaga. Upon our arrival at the lake edge the birds were perched atop the small boathouse. As we walked to within 6 or 7 m, some of them took wing, only to fly about very near us; others merely shifted position slightly on the roof. A few fluttered under the low metal roof of a shelter attached to the building where they perched beside four Wire-tailed Swallows *Hirundo smithii* already sheltering there from the intermittent light rain.

The martins were not shy, and seemed reluctant to take wing. However, they were not present upon our return to the site about three hours later. Our observations spanned a 10-min period during which we studied the birds at various angles through 10X and 8X binoculars. I exposed two frames of 35 mm Ektachrome colour film on one martin, but lighting conditions were poor. Nevertheless, the bird is identifiable in the resulting transparency which has been lodged in the Department of Ornithology of the National Museums of Kenya in Nairobi. [Black and white prints sent with the MS of this note show little detail owing to the bird being nearly silhouetted against the bright grey sky. They are not suitable for reproduction here and have been deposited in the National Museums' Department of Ornithology together with the transparency, Ed.]

The martins appeared to be dusky brown above, darker on the wings and tail. The whitish underparts were boldly streaked throughout with dark brown, and the flanks were somewhat dusky. In the air, their languid flight set them apart from most other East African hirundines at first glance.

This appears to be the first observation of *Phedina borbonica* in Kenya, and the first inland record anywhere in East Africa. Mackworth-Praed & Grant (1960) attribute the species to Pemba Island, presumably based on Moreau & Pakenham (1941), between November and March and in August and September. Interestingly, in Malawi, Benson & Benson (1977) also recorded Mascarene Martins at an inland lake during late June: "Collected, and plentiful, over Lake Chilwa, 28 June 1944 (Benson)." The Bensons also cite Long's record of eight birds of this species seen in flight near Chididi, Malawi on 6 April 1959. I am aware of no other mainland reports of this readily identified species.

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SURVIVAL AND INTERCOLONY MOVEMENT OF WHITE-BROWED SPARROW WEAVERS

PLOCEPASSER MAHALI OVER A TWO-YEAR PERIOD Ringing of individuals with distinctive combinations of coloured rings makes information on their survival and movements readily available, and is a feasible procedure where numbers of individuals to be observed are not too great. In 1976, from 17 March to 17 June, we ringed 45 adult or independent young White-browed Sparrow Weavers in the Samburu-Buffalo Springs Game Reserve in Kenya; 26 of them in the Samburu Game Lodge area and 19 around the Buffalo Springs bandas. A map showing the location of 13 nesting colonies in 1976 at the Samburu site in separate acacia trees has been published (Collias & Collias 1978). Since the same colour combination of two rings was used on each leg, it was necessary to see only one leg to identify any ringed individual. On some birds a numbered EANHS aluminium ring was used on one leg and a white ring in the corresponding position on the other.

The birds reside at their nesting trees the year round and, during 6-12 April 1978, when we returned to the study sites we found 21, or 47 per cent., of the colour-ringed birds still present. We believe that the rest had suffered mortality (rather than having dispersed widely) because almost all colonies nearby were checked and found to consist of unringed individuals. All the 21 ringed birds still had all four rings, except for two at Buffalo Springs which had lost one ring each and one bird which had lost three of its original four rings. None of the 13 surviving birds at Samburu had lost any rings.



Zimmerman, Dale A. 1978. "Mascarene martins in Kenya." *Scopus* 2, 74-75.

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