

References

- BRITTON, P. L. (ED) 1980. *Birds of East Africa, their habitat and distribution*. Nairobi: EANHHS.
- CLEMENT, P., HARRIS, A. & DAVIS, J. 1993 *Finches and sparrows, an identification guide*. London: Christopher Helm.
- LEWIS, A. & POMEROY, D. 1989. *A bird atlas of Kenya*. Rotterdam: Balkema.
- MACKWORTH-PRAED, C. W. & GRANT, C. H. B. 1960. *African handbook of birds, series 1, vol. 2, Birds of eastern and north eastern Africa*. London: Longmans.
- SVENSSON, L. 1994. *Identification Guide to European passerines, 4th edition*. Tring: BTO.
- ZIMMERMAN, D. A., PEARSON, D. J. AND TURNER, D. A. 1996. *Birds of Kenya and northern Tanzania*. Halfway House: Russel Friedman.

Ogeto Mwebi, Department of Osteology, National Museums of Kenya,
Box 40658, Nairobi, Kenya

Scopus 20: 53–55, May 1998

Received 13 November 1997

A nest of Hartlaub's Bustard *Eupodotis hartlaubii*

The nest and eggs of Hartlaub's Bustard are apparently undescribed (Mackworth-Praed & Grant 1957, Zimmerman *et al.* 1996). Although recorded as recently breeding in three locations in Kenya by Lewis & Pomeroy (1989), no details are given.

On 7 May 1997 a sitting female Hartlaub's Bustard was disturbed off her nest on Game Ranching Limited, 01°31'36"S, 36°59'48"E. It contained two recently laid eggs. Three days later the nest was revisited and found to be empty. However, 30 m northeast, an incubating female Hartlaub's Bustard was found with two eggs. The first clutch may have been depredated and a second clutch laid nearby, or possibly the female moved the nest. Five days later the nest was revisited and the two eggs were warm.

On 16 May 1997, the nest had moved some 5 m west and only one egg was present. The other was found about 40 m away on a road and appeared to have been partly eaten, by a corvid rather than a jackal or mongoose. It contained a 4-cm embryo.

On 25 May 1997 the nest was searched for in vain. Either the clutch had been depredated or, in view of the shifting nature of the nest, the egg may have been rolled to another site.

All three nests were in natural clearings in the long grass with no obvious entry or exit routes. The eggs were laid on dried fallen grass which appeared to have been natural and not constructed. The nests had no discernable hollow. The stamped-down area was considered to be the nest bowl and measured at about 23 cm (circumference) on all nests. The fresh green grass height averaged some 46 cm, and the seeding heads some 95 cm. The species of grass was predominantly *Themeda triandra*.

Both eggs were olive green-brown with clearly defined brown spots of 4 to 6 mm diameter. Both showed a greater concentration of pigment at the point of the egg. The eggs were remarkably round and larger than those of the White-bellied Bustard

Eupodotis senegalensis. Measurements of the two Hartlaub's Bustard eggs were 51 x 58 and 52 x 60 mm (the second egg was fractured, so the length is an estimate, accurate to within about 2 mm). Two White-bellied Bustard eggs laid in December 1996 on Game Ranching Ltd were 42 x 53.5 and 43 x 52.5 mm. White-bellied Bustard eggs are similarly coloured but the brown spots are diffuse and evenly distributed. They are the size and shape of a chicken's egg with a rather pronounced point.

Acknowledgements

I am grateful to Colin Jackson and Dr Leon Bennun of the Ornithology Department, National Museums of Kenya for their comments. I also wish to thank Dr David Hopcraft for giving me permission to live and work on his ranch.

References

- LEWIS, A. & POMEROY, D. 1989. *A bird atlas of Kenya*. Rotterdam: Balkema.
- MACKWORTH-PRAED, C. W. & GRANT, C. H. B. 1957. *African handbook of birds*, Series 1, vol 1. *Birds of eastern and north eastern Africa*. London: Longman.
- ZIMMERMAN, D. A., TURNER, D. A. & PEARSON, D. J. 1996. *Birds of Kenya and northern Tanzania*. Halfway House: Russel Friedman.

Simon Thomsett, Ornithology Department, National Museums of Kenya, Box 40658, Nairobi, and The Peregrine Fund, 566 West Flying Hawk Lane, Boise, Idaho 83709, USA

Scopus 20: 55–56, May 1998

Received 17 October 1997, revised 20 November 1997

Sighting of White-collared Kingfisher *Halcyon chloris* in south-central Somalia

During a recent visit to the coastal plains north-east of Mogadishu I observed a single specimen of White-collared Kingfisher *Halcyon chloris*.

While examining shallow wells used by pastoralists at a point a few kilometres north of Warsheikh, and only 400–600 m from the shoreline, I noticed a strikingly marked, greenish blue and white bird on the top of a low bush, at a distance of about 30 m. The type of bird and plumage details were clear on examination though 8 x 10 binoculars—it was a medium-sized kingfisher with a shiny greenish-blue mantle and head (down to through the eye), clear white below and around the neck (the last feature was quite striking). Later reference to van Perlo (1996) and Fry *et al.* (1988) confirmed the identification.

I estimate the location was 46°E, 2°30'N. This would be in Somalia atlas square 64A as defined by Ash & Miskell (1983), who mention two records, "one old and one recent", from the north of Somalia. They make no reference to any records from the south-central region. Fry *et al.* (1988) include the same two records but also state that "other records from the south are probably erroneous". This reference is to Snow (1978), who mentions two records, one probably being in the area of Balad, 60–70 km due west of the site of the present record.



Thomsett, Simon. 1998. "A nest of Hartlaub's bustard *Eupodotis hartlaubii*." *Scopus* 20, 55–56.

View This Item Online: <https://www.biodiversitylibrary.org/item/164177>

Permalink: <https://www.biodiversitylibrary.org/partpdf/140165>

Holding Institution

Natural History Museum Library, London

Sponsored by

Natural History Museum Library, London

Copyright & Reuse

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

Rights Holder: Nature Kenya, East Africa Natural History Society

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>.