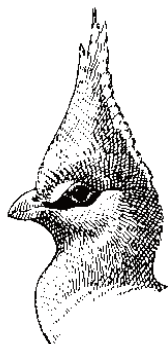
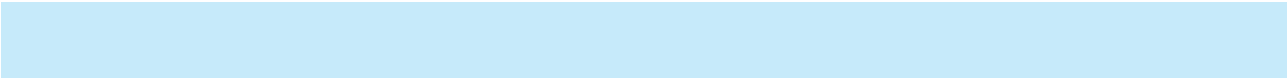


**Ornithological surveys in Owabi Wildlife Sanctuary,
Ghana
(January 2005 and January 2009)**

Françoise Dowsett-Lemaire & Robert J. Dowsett

A report prepared for the Wildlife Division, Forestry Commission, Accra, Ghana





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***E-mail:* Dowsett@aol.com**

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by *Françoise Dowsett-Lemaire & Robert J. Dowsett*

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Summary

Owabi Wildlife Sanctuary (13 km²) protects a chunk of forest around the Owabi reservoir, a few km north-west of Kumasi. The lake is fringed by a belt of marsh vegetation, including *Typha* reedbeds. A system of paths gives access to the low-canopy, secondary forest situated between the office and the lake. A path has recently been re-opened in the taller forest on the other side. Altogether we recorded 155 species (10-11 January 2005, 2-5 January 2009), and the overall list for Owabi is around 182. Little Rush Warbler *Bradypterus baboecala* occurs on the edge of the lake: it was discovered in 2005, at the western limit of its range. The highlight in 2009 was a Spot-breasted Ibis *Bostrychia rara* on the stream below the dam; Congo Serpent Eagle *Dryotriorchis spectabilis*, Little Green, Tiny and Johanna's Sunbirds *Nectarinia seimundi*, *N. minulla* and *N. johannae* and Copper-tailed Glossy Starling *Lamprotornis cupreocauda* are some of the Guineo-Congolian species found in the taller forest in 2009. Tit-hylia *Pholidornis rufiae* occur at high densities throughout. Historical records of Crowned Eagle *Stephanoaetus coronatus*, Yellow-casqued Hornbill *Ceratogymna elata* and some others (all gone since the 1970s) show that Owabi W.S. is not big enough to protect sensitive species with large territories, and it is likely deforestation outside Owabi played a key role in their disappearance. However Owabi W.S. offers good opportunities for watching small mammals and birds at close range, has an obvious role to play in environmental education and efforts should be increased to make this site more accessible and better documented.

1. INTRODUCTION

Owabi Wildlife Sanctuary (6°45'N, 1°43'W) is a small reserve (a mere 13 km²), set a few km to the north-west of Kumasi. It protects a chunk of forest around the Owabi reservoir. The lake itself is surrounded by a belt of swamp vegetation (a mixture of grass, *Typha* reedbeds and *Raphia* swamps); the surplus water flows out of the dam into a shallow rocky river, lined with riparian forest. A powerline crosses the forest on one side of the reserve.

We arrived at Owabi on the evening of 10 January 2005, camped on the spot on the edge of the forest and spent the next morning in the accessible part of the forest (where paths were maintained). The lack of paths prevented us from getting into the taller forest on the other side of the lake, thus we left midday on the 11th January. In 2009 we arrived on the evening of 2 January and left on the 5th in mid-morning. Our time was shared

between the secondary forest on the right side of the dam, the taller forest on the left (where the path was recently re-opened), and surroundings of the dam, stream and secondary growth in farmland beyond. We recorded 95 bird species on our first visit and 140 on our second, and overall 155 species.

2. HABITAT CLASSIFICATION

Habitats include: open water, rocky stream, marsh vegetation (grass, *Typha* reedbeds and *Raphia* open swamps with *Thelypteris* ferns), semi-evergreen rain forest, secondary growth along the edges and the powerline. The section of forest situated between the office at the entrance and the picnic site (by the dam wall) has a low canopy and can be considered as seriously degraded or secondary. The understorey is fairly open; *Culcasia* creepers are common around trunks and part of the forest floor near the lake is rather moist or even swampy. Taller trees belong to *Albizia zygia*, *Ceiba pentandra*, *Piptadeniastrum africanum*, *Terminalia superba*; some exotic elements are present too, i.e. *Cedrela odorata* and *Senna siamea*.

The forest on the other side of the lake is taller, with also *Triplochiton scleroxylon*. At the far end of the lake there are clumps of exotic bamboo *Bambusa vulgaris*.

3. THE AVIFAUNA

3.1. References and past reports

Owabi was not well documented in the past, despite its proximity to Kumasi. Dutson & Branscombe (1990) visited Owabi for one day (21 July 1988) and mention the 10 species they recorded there; one of them, the savanna guineafowl *Numida meleagris*, is almost certainly of domestic origin.

A zoological survey by Wilson & Kpelle (1992) includes a bird list of just over 80 species. Unfortunately this list contains many errors and is unusable.

Beier *et al.* (2002) carried out five transect counts in Owabi (spending 30 minutes per transect) and repeated them on a second visit, thus counting birds for a total of 5 hours. In that period they recorded 18 of 81 “target” forest species. Details of these species were not included in their paper but were sent to us by P. Beier (*in litt.*). Two of the species are unexpected and have not been confirmed for the area: Fiery-breasted Bush Shrike *Malaconotus cruentus* and Spotted Greenbul *Ixonotus guttatus*. The latter is unlikely in such a small forest at the limit of its range, and the calls of the former may have been confused with those of another species.

Finally, H. Kahl published three species records in the News section of the *Bull. Afr. Bird Club* (1995, 2: 62), and R. Cruse, a bird tour leader, sent us some recent observations (*in litt.*), from three tours in February (2001-03). Van den Brink *et al.* (1998) paid a brief visit in December 1996.

We have used some of the above unpublished records in the species list below, after deleting unlikely species. Interviews with local guards Andrews Awni and especially Thomas Kwati provided useful information; T. Kwati is retired but lives in the village next to the entrance of Owabi and he has kept some records since the 1970s.

3.2. Totals recorded

We recorded 155 species altogether; the overall list includes 182 species. Briggs (2004: 307) mentions a total of 145 bird species, but it is unclear what this figure is based on.

3.3. Ecological considerations

The marsh holds a few specialized species, such as the gallinule *Porphyrio porphyrio*, two coucals *Centropus grillii* and *C. monachus*, and the warbler *Bradypterus baboecala*, which was new for Ghana in 2005. The taller forest to the left of the dam contains a number of bird species not found in the shorter forest opposite, including

Congo Serpent Eagle *Dryotriorchis spectabilis*, Fraser's Eagle Owl *Bubo poensis*, Hairy-breasted Barbet *Tricholaema hirsuta*, some bulbuls (*Criniger barbatus* and *C. calurus*), warblers (*Macrosphenus concolor*, *Apalis sharpii*), flycatchers (*Trochocercus nitens*, *Myioparus griseigularis*), sunbirds (*Deleornis fraseri*, *Anthreptes rectirostris*, *Nectarinia seimundi*, *N. minulla*, *N. johannae*), Red-billed Helmet Shrike *Prionops caniceps* and all four Malimbe species *Malimbus* spp.

3.4. Biome-restricted species

So far, 83 species of the **Guineo-Congolian** biome have been recorded, but a few only in the past: *Tigriornis leucolopha*, *Bostrychia rara*, *Pteronetta hartlaubi* (past only), *Dryotriorchis spectabilis*, *Francolinus lathamii*, *F. achantensis*, *Himantornis haematopus*, *Sarothrura pulchra*, *Turtur brehmeri*, *Psittacus erithacus*, *Tauraco macrorhynchus* (extinct by 2009), *T. persa* (marginal), *Centropus leucogaster*, *Glaucidium tephronotum*, *Halcyon badia*, *Merops gularis*, *Eurystomus gularis*, *Tropicranus albocristatus*, *Tockus hartlaubi* (past only), *T. fasciatus*, *Bycanistes fistulator*, *Ceratogymna elata* (past only), *Gymnobucco calvus*, *G. peli*, *Pogoniulus scolopaceus*, *P. subsulphureus*, *P. atroflavus*, *Tricholaema hirsuta*, *Indicator maculatus*, *Campethera nivosa*, *Thripias pyrrhogaster*, *Smithornis rufolateralis*, *Andropadus gracilis*, *A. curvirostris*, *Baeopogon indicator*, *Chlorocichla simplex*, *Thescelocichla leucopleura*, *Phyllastrephus albigularis*, *Bleda canicapillus*, *Criniger barbatus*, *C. calurus*, *Nicator chloris*, *Stizorhina fraseri finschi*, *Alethe diademata*, *Stiphornis erythrothorax*, *Erythropygia leucosticta*, *Sylvietta virens*, *S. denti*, *Macrosphenus concolor*, *M. kempii*, *Hylia prasina*, *Apalis sharpii*, *Camaroptera superciliaris*, *C. chloronota*, *Muscicapa comitata*, *Myioparus griseigularis*, *Dyaphorophya castanea*, *Trochocercus nitens*, *Terpsiphone rufiventer*, *Illadopsis fulvescens*, *I. puveli*, *Pholidornis rushiae*, *Deleornis fraseri*, *Anthreptes rectirostris*, *Nectarinia seimundi*, *N. cyanolaema*, *N. adelberti*, *N. minulla*, *N. johannae*, *N. superba*, *Oriolus nigripennis*, *Prionops caniceps*, *Dicrurus (adsimilis) modestus*, *Lamprotornis cupreocauda*, *Ploceus nigerrimus*, *Malimbus nitens*, *M. malimbicus*, *M. scutatus*, *M. rubricollis*, *Nigrita bicolor*, *N. fusconotus*, *Spermophaga haematina*. The turaco *Corythaëola cristata* (now extinct) may be added as a Guineo-Congolian near-endemic, while the owl *Bubo poensis* (included in earlier lists) is excluded as it occurs in the Tanzanian mountains in the form of another subspecies.

3.5. Globally-threatened species

The White-crested Tiger Heron *Tigriornis leucolopha* was previously considered "Data Deficient", but BirdLife (2008) has recently downlisted this bird to Least Concerned. One was seen by H. Kahl on 18 Mar 1994 (*Bull. Afr. Bird Club* 2: 62). From what we know of this discreet bird in Ghana and elsewhere (in Central Africa), it is less uncommon than it appears and is not endangered.

Grey Parrot *Psittacus erithacus* (Near Threatened, BirdLife 2008) is an occasional visitor, probably mainly in the rains (see below).

Yellow-casqued Hornbill *Ceratogymna elata* (Near Threatened) is one of several large birds now considered extinct in the area; it is still common in Bomfobiri Wildlife Sanctuary to the east of Kumasi.

The Copper-tailed Glossy Starling *Lamprotornis cupreocauda* (Near Threatened) is also probably an occasional visitor (see below).

3.6. The biogeographical importance of Owabi

Spot-breasted Ibis *Bostrychia rara* is close to its northern limit of range in Ghana but has also been found further north on the Sene river (at 7°30'N, pers. obs. in Mar 2008) and is known from the Ongwam river in Bomfobiri (Thomas Kwati pers. comm.).

One species of special interest was found during our 2005 visit: Little Rush Warbler *Bradypterus baboecala*, heard singing in dense *Typha* reedbeds on the other side of the lake (11 Jan). The songster was too far to be tape-recorded, but we are familiar with its typical song from several countries in Africa, including Zambia, Malawi and Cameroon. This is a warbler of dense aquatic vegetation, which is very widespread in

tropical and southern Africa but tends to get scarce west of Cameroon. It is known from few places in Nigeria and has only recently been identified in southern Togo (Selfe 2003). There is a possible record of a singing bird from northern Côte d'Ivoire (Thiollay 1985), without details. It was not listed for Ghana by Grimes (1987), even though Chappuis (1978) had published a good tape-recording of the song said to have been obtained in Ghana by L.G. Grimes. However, L.G. Grimes (*in litt.*) informs us that this recording came in fact from Cameroon, not Ghana, and so the Owabi record is the first for the country. Since 2005 Andrew Hester has found it in a marsh east of Accra, Sakumo lagoon, where we also heard it on 28 Feb 2008.

Some of the Guineo-Congolian birds recorded are rather rare elsewhere in Ghana or West Africa, in particular the Forest Scrub Robin *Erythropygia leucosticta*. This record is based on a sighting by H. Kahl (on 20 Mar 1995: *Bull. Afr. Bird Club* 2: 63) and the exact status of this bird needs further investigation. We played the pre-recorded tape of its song in various places but failed to get a reaction. It is possibly completely silent (and unresponsive) in the dry season. On the other hand, some little-known species like Grey-throated Flycatcher *Myioparus griseigularis* and Tiny Sunbird *Nectarinia minulla* appear a lot more widespread in the rain forests of south-west Ghana than previously reported and it was not surprising to find them at Owabi.

3.7. Conservation aspects

We obtained good views of Campbell's (Mona) Monkey *Cercopithecus (mona) campbelli* and of very tame Cusimanse Mongoose *Crossarchus obscurus* from the main paths in the forest. Our general impression is that protection of the forest is rather effective at the moment.

The disappearance of a number of bird species since the 1970s (including Hartlaub's Duck, Crowned Eagle, Yellow-casqued Hornbill) cannot be due to the situation at Owabi, but to the general increase in cultivation around Kumasi concomitant with deforestation and hunting. Some patches of secondary forest remain in the vicinity of the reserve, and some species appear highly mobile, moving between these and Owabi (cf. Johanna's Sunbird, Copper-tailed Glossy Starling); both Parrot species are also wide-ranging, as they visit Owabi seasonally from further afar.

3.8. Breeding records

Vocal activity was high in January, suggesting breeding was not yet over for some species. On the other hand, certain understory birds are completely silent in the middle of the dry season, such as Narina's Trogon, Red-chested Cuckoo and Forest Robin or Forest Scrub Robin. The following records were obtained:

Tit-hylia *Pholidornis ruficollis*: pair feeding one or two fledged young in low canopy (close to the edge), 11 Jan 2005 (eggs laid probably Nov).

Chestnut Wattle-eye *Dyaphorophya castanea*: pair with fledged young (begging), 11 Jan (eggs laid probably Nov).

Blue-billed Malimbe *Malimbus nitens*: adult feeding fledgling, 3 Jan 2009.

4. ANNOTATED SPECIES LIST

English names usually follow Borrow & Demey (2001, 2004) and scientific nomenclature Dowsett & Forbes-Watson (1993), with a few changes. Species recorded by other observers than ourselves are marked with an *.

Little Grebe *Tachybaptus ruficollis*. Three in the middle of the lake, 3 Jan 2009. Also well known to wildlife guards and possibly breeding locally.

Long-tailed (Reed) Cormorant *Phalacrocorax africanus*. One at the dam (Jan 2005); known to wildlife guards and probably an occasional visitor. Also Feb (R. Cruse).

*White-crested Tiger Heron *Tigriornis leucolopha*. One seen by H. Kahl on 18 Mar 1994 (1995, *Bull. Afr. Bird*

Club 2: 62). Normally in forest by streams.

Black-crowned Night Heron *Nycticorax nycticorax*. Heard at night, both visits.

Squacco Heron *Ardeola ralloides*. One on 3 Jan 2009 on shallow water below the dam; also reported by R. Cruse (*in litt.*, Feb).

Cattle Egret *Bubulcus ibis*. A few around the dam, Jan 2009.

Green-backed Heron *Butorides striata*. A few in vegetation at the water's edge.

Little Egret *Egretta garzetta*. The odd one at the dam or below on the river, both visits.

Great (White) Egret *Egretta alba*. The odd one at the water's edge, Jan 2005.

Purple Heron *Ardea purpurea*. A few in marsh vegetation, both visits. Also Feb (R. Cruse).

Grey Heron *Ardea cinerea*. The odd one at the water's edge, both visits.

Hamerkop *Scopus umbretta*. A pair at the dam Jan 2009; and a nest (unused) in a tree by the lake. Wildlife guards reckon the species arrived about 2006. At the southern limit of its range.

*Openbill Stork *Anastomus lamelligerus*. Occasionally present in the 1970s, but hunted and no recent records (T. Kwati).

Spot-breasted Ibis *Bostrychia rara*. One flying, calling, upstream towards the forest at 5h50 (dawn) on 4 Jan 2009. The stream flows through secondary farmbrush.

White-faced Whistling Duck *Dendrocygna viduata*. Several dozen on the lake, or even hundreds (both visits).

*Spur-winged Goose *Plectropterus gambensis*. Recorded in the 1970s, probably as an irregular visitor, but no recent records (T. Kwati).

*Hartlaub's Duck *Pteronetta hartlaubi*. Present in the 1970s, but hunted and now extinct (T. Kwati).

African Pygmy Goose *Nettapus auritus*. One on the lake (Jan 2009). Also reported by Dutson & Branscombe (1990: three seen, 21 Jul 1988). Regularly seen by guards. Easily overlooked in marsh vegetation.

*Garganey *Anas querquedula*. Present in the 1970s (T. Kwati).

*African Cuckoo Hawk *Aviceda cuculoides*. Reported by R. Cruse (*in litt.*), 16 Feb 2001.

European Honey Buzzard *Pernis apivorus*. One on 4 Jan 2009.

Bat Hawk *Macheiramphus alcinus*. One at dusk flying over the dam, 10 Jan 2005.

Yellow-billed Kite *Milvus migrans*. A pair around the dam, both visits.

*Palm-nut Vulture *Gypohierax angolensis*. Three seen in Jul 1988 (Dutson & Branscombe 1990); also known to local guards.

Hooded Vulture *Necrosyrtes monachus*. A commensal species (common in Kumasi).

Congo Serpent Eagle *Dryotriorchis spectabilis*. One singing on the edge of the tall forest, 3 Jan 2009 at 8h05.

African Harrier Hawk (Gymnogone) *Polyboroides typus*. Seen in 2009; also recorded by Dutson & Branscombe (1990).

Black Sparrowhawk (Goshawk) *Accipiter melanoleucus*. One at forest edges, Jan 2009.

African Goshawk *Accipiter tachiro*. Present in forest on both sides of the lake, and singing early morning (6h15-6h20), Jan 2009. Also seen in farmbrush just outside.

Lizard Buzzard *Kaupifalco monogrammicus*. In secondary growth outside forest.

*Crowned Eagle *Stephanoaetus coronatus*. Present in the 1970s, but now extinct (T. Kwati). This is likely due more to deforestation around Owabi than to hunting pressure; the size of forest left in the area is too small for this large predator of monkeys.

*Osprey *Pandion haliaetus*. One juvenile at dam, 18 Dec 1996 (van den Brink *et al.* 1998).

Grey Kestrel *Falco ardosiaceus*. Present at forest edges along the entrance road, and well established judging by amount of calling (2009).

African Hobby *Falco cuvierii*. One on 3 Jan 2009, just outside forest.

Lanner Falcon *Falco biarmicus*. One outside forest, circling over farmbrush, 3 Jan 2009.

Latham's Forest Francolin *Francolinus lathamii*. Calling at dusk (in forest), Jan 2005.

Ahanta Francolin *Francolinus achantensis*. Several calling at dusk (forest and forest edges).

*Nkulengu Rail *Himantornis haematopus*. The distinctive voice of this large rail is well known to local guards. (Apparently not calling in Jan).

White-spotted Flufftail *Sarothrura pulchra*. Calling in humid forest understorey.

Black Crake *Amaurornis flavirostra*. Pair in marsh at the water's edge.

- Purple Swamphen (or Gallinule) *Porphyrio porphyrio*. Heard at night (in *Typha* marsh) Jan 2005; already reported by H. Kahl in 1994 (*Bull. Afr. Bird Club* 2: 62).
- *African Finfoot *Podica senegalensis*. Reported by R. Cruse (*in litt.*) and known to guards. Inhabits the water's edge close to dense vegetation.
- African Jacana *Actophilornis africana*. Common on moist sand and in marsh at the water's edge.
- Green Sandpiper *Tringa ochropus*. One or two on the stream, Jan 2009.
- Common Sandpiper *Actitis hypoleucos*. A few at the dam, often on rocks, both visits.
- Laughing Dove *Streptopelia senegalensis*. Commensal species, occasional at picnic site.
- Vinaceous Dove *Streptopelia vinacea*. A rare visitor in the dry season from the northern savannas, with a few birds outside the reserve, but also two inside the picnic area, Jan 2009.
- Red-eyed Dove *Streptopelia semitorquata*. In secondary forest and edges.
- Blue-spotted Wood Dove *Turtur afer*. In secondary forest and edges.
- Tambourine Dove *Turtur tympanistris*. In forest.
- Blue-headed Wood Dove *Turtur brehmeri*. In forest (2005); not heard in 2009.
- African Green Pigeon *Treron calvus*. In forest.
- *Grey Parrot *Psittacus erithacus*. Four seen 21 Jul 1988 (Dutson & Branscombe 1990). Known to guards, Andrews Awni last recorded it in Apr 2008.
- *Red-fronted Parrot *Poicephalus gulielmi*. Known to guards as a visitor.
- Yellow-billed (Verreaux's) Turaco *Tauraco macrorhynchus*. Several calling in forest on 10-11 Jan 2005. Absent in Jan 2009. On the other hand Green Turacos *T. persa* are resident outside the reserve, in farmbrush with trees and strips of *Raphia*; they do not appear to enter the rain forest.
- *Great Blue Turaco *Corythaeola cristata*. Distinctive species well known to T. Kwati and other guards as having been present (and common) in the 1970s and until the mid-1980s. Now extinct, but still common in Bomfobiri Reserve east of Kumasi.
- *Red-chested Cuckoo *Cuculus solitarius*. Completely silent in the dry season, but its song is known to wildlife guards. Normally common in any forest, singing in the rains.
- Emerald Cuckoo *Chrysococcyx cupreus*. Singing in forest, both visits.
- Klaas's Cuckoo *Chrysococcyx klaas*. Singing at forest edges, Jan 2009.
- Yellowbill (Green Coucal) *Ceuthmochares aereus*. Common in forest.
- African Black Coucal *Centropus grillii*. One seen in *Thelypteris* swamp, 4 Jan 2009. Also Feb (R. Cruse).
- Black-throated Coucal *Centropus leucogaster*. Heard in forest.
- Blue-headed Coucal *Centropus monachus*. A pair well seen in *Raphia* marsh, both visits.
- Barn Owl *Tyto alba*. Heard at the picnic site; well known to guards.
- Fraser's Eagle Owl *Bubo poensis*. Purring call heard at the edge of the tall forest near the stream, just before dawn (5h30), 3 Jan 2009.
- Red-chested Owlet *Glaucidium tephronotum*. Heard in forest on both visits, evening and also by day (morning).
- African Wood Owl *Strix woodfordii*. In forest.
- *Narina's Trogon *Apaloderma narina*. Known to T. Kwati (forest), but not singing in January.
- Shining-blue Kingfisher *Alcedo quadibrachys*. One pair at the dam and along the river.
- Malachite Kingfisher *Alcedo cristata*. On the edge of the lake.
- African Pygmy Kingfisher *Ceyx pictus*. One at forest edges near the picnic site, Jan 2009.
- *Chocolate-backed Kingfisher *Halcyon badia*. Known to T. Kwati (forest), perhaps only a visitor in this small forest.
- Blue-breasted Kingfisher *Halcyon malimbica*. Common in forest.
- Woodland (Senegal) Kingfisher *Halcyon senegalensis*. At forest edges, both visits.
- *Pied Kingfisher *Ceryle rudis*. Occasionally seen at the dam by guards, as a visitor.
- Giant Kingfisher *Megaceryle maxima*. At the dam and along the river.
- Black Bee-eater *Merops gularis*. One at forest edges (beyond the dam), Jan 2009.
- White-throated Bee-eater *Merops albicollis*. Several at forest edges and in open canopy of tall forest.
- *Broad-billed Roller *Eurystomus glaucurus*. Known to wildlife guards as present in the rains.

- Blue-throated Roller *Eurystomus gularis*. Singles forest and over the dam, 2005.
- White-crested Hornbill *Tropicranus albocristatus*. In forest, close to a group of Campbell's (Mona) Monkeys, both visits.
- *Black Dwarf Hornbill *Tockus hartlaubi*. Known to T. Kwati from the past, no recent records.
- African Pied Hornbill *Tockus fasciatus*. A few in forest.
- African Grey Hornbill *Tockus nasutus*. One at forest edges, 4 Jan 2009: a dry-season visitor.
- *Piping Hornbill *Bycanistes fistulator*. Four seen in Jul 1988 (Dutson & Branscombe 1990); known to wildlife guards as a visitor.
- *Yellow-casqued Hornbill *Ceratogymna elata*. Known to wildlife guards from the past, no recent records, but still common in Bomfobiri Reserve east of Kumasi.
- Naked-faced Barbet *Gymnobucco calvus*. On the edge of forest.
- *Bristle-nosed Barbet *Gymnobucco peli*. Identified by T. Kwati, occurring alongside the previous species.
- Speckled Tinkerbird *Pogoniulus scolopaceus*. Forest.
- Yellow-throated Tinkerbird *Pogoniulus subsulphureus*. Forest.
- Red-rumped Tinkerbird *Pogoniulus atroflavus*. Forest.
- Hairy-breasted Barbet *Tricholaema hirsuta*. Confined to the tall forest left of the dam (2009).
- Vieillot's Barbet *Lybius vieilloti*. Heard on the edge of forest, and widespread in farmbush outside the reserve.
- Double-toothed Barbet *Lybius bidentatus*. Seen regularly by T. Kwati in his garden (and by us in farmbush), and likely to visit forest edges occasionally.
- Spotted Honeyguide *Indicator maculatus*. One singing in forest, Jan 2005.
- Lesser (Thick-billed) Honeyguide *Indicator minor* (presumably *conirostris*). One singing in forest, Jan 2005.
- Buff-spotted Woodpecker *Campethera nivosus*. Pairs in mixed parties in forest.
- Fire-bellied Woodpecker *Thripias pyrrhogaster*. One in forest canopy (2005).
- Rufous-sided Broadbill *Smithornis rufolateralis*. One in forest (2009).
- Rufous-chested Swallow *Hirundo semirufa*. Reported by R. Cruse (*in litt.*) on 16 Feb 2001, and seen by us taking a dip in the lake on 4 Jan 2009.
- Lesser Striped Swallow *Hirundo abyssinica*. Several, often over water.
- Barn (European) Swallow *Hirundo rustica*. A few.
- African Pied Wagtail *Motacilla aguimp*. Especially on rocks at the dam and on the river below.
- Plain-backed Pipit *Anthus leucophrys*. A pair on lawn at the picnic site, with male occasionally singing (Jan 2009).
- Little Greenbul *Andropadus virens*. Common in forest.
- Little Grey Greenbul *Andropadus gracilis*. In forest.
- Cameroon Sombre Greenbul *Andropadus curvirostris*. In forest understorey.
- Slender-billed Greenbul *Andropadus gracilirostris*. In forest canopy.
- Yellow-whiskered Greenbul *Andropadus latirostris*. In forest understorey.
- Honeyguide Greenbul *Baeopogon indicator*. In forest canopy.
- Simple Greenbul (Simple Leaflove) *Chlorocichla simplex*. In secondary growth just outside forest.
- Swamp Palm Bulbul *Thescelocichla leucopleura*. In forest with *Raphia*.
- White-throated Greenbul *Phyllastrephus albigularis*. In dense forest understorey.
- Grey-headed Bristlebill *Bleda canicapillus*. In forest understorey.
- Western Bearded Greenbul *Criniger barbatus*. Confined to the taller forest, left of the dam, where easily found on our second visit. Was listed by P. Beier (*in litt.*) for that area.
- Red-tailed Greenbul *Criniger calurus*. Like previous species, confined to the taller forest left of the dam, and listed by P. Beier (*in litt.*).
- Common Bulbul *Pycnonotus barbatus*. In secondary growth, forest edges.
- Western Nicator *Nicator chloris*. In forest.
- Finsch's (Rufous) Flycatcher Thrush *Stizorhina fraseri finschi*. In forest understorey.
- Fire-crested (White-tailed) Alethe *Alethe diademata*. In forest understorey.
- *Forest Robin *Stiphornis erythrothorax*. Listed by P. Beier (*in litt.*) for the forest left of the dam. Not heard or seen on either visit, nor responding to playback.

- *Forest Scrub Robin *Erythropygia leucosticta*. One seen by H. Kahl (1995, *Bull. Afr. Bird Club* 2: 63) on 24 Mar 1994. No response to tape playback anywhere in Jan 2005 and 2009.
- Little Rush Warbler *Bradypterus baboecala*. On heard singing in *Typha* marsh on the other side of the lake, 11 Jan 2005. New record for Ghana!
- Great Reed Warbler *Acrocephalus arundinaceus*. One or two calling and singing in rank vegetation near the lake, Jan 2009.
- Green Crombec *Sylvietta virens*. In forest and farmbush.
- Lemon-bellied Crombec *Sylvietta denti*. One seen in a tall *Ceiba*, Jan 2009.
- Grey Longbill *Macrosphenus concolor*. Confined to the tall forest left of the dam, and indeed listed by P. Beier (*in litt.*) for that area.
- Kemp's Longbill *Macrosphenus kempii*. Several singing in thickets at or near the edge of forest, Jan 2009.
- Wood Warbler *Phylloscopus sibilatrix*. Seen in the canopy of a tall flowering *Triplochiton*, 3 Jan 2009.
- Green Hylia *Hylia prasina*. Throughout forest.
- Whistling Cisticola *Cisticola lateralis*. In secondary growth outside forest.
- Red-faced Cisticola *Cisticola erythrops*. In rank grass near the lake.
- Tawny-flanked Prinia *Prinia subflava*. In grass near the lake.
- Sharpe's Apalis *Apalis sharpii*. Heard only in the tall forest left of the dam, Jan 2009.
- Grey-backed Camaroptera *Camaroptera brachyura*. In secondary forest and at edges.
- Yellow-browed Camaroptera *Camaroptera supercilialis*. At forest edges and in thickets, mostly left of the dam.
- Olive-green Camaroptera *Camaroptera chloronota*. In forest understorey.
- Spotted Flycatcher *Muscicapa striata*. One in the canopy of a *Ceiba* just outside forest, 3 Jan 2009.
- Dusky-blue Flycatcher *Muscicapa comitata*. Two birds counter-singing at forest edges and in a strip of *Raphia*, respectively (2009).
- Grey-throated Flycatcher *Myioparus griseigularis*. Several heard in thickets or at edges (forest left of the dam).
- Black-and-white Flycatcher *Bias musicus*. Pair at the forest edge, both visits.
- Chestnut Wattle-eye *Dyaphorophya castanea*. In forest understorey; including a family with begging immatures (Jan 2005).
- Blue-headed Crested Flycatcher *Trochocercus nitens*. Confined to thickets in forest left of the dam, and listed by P. Beier (*in litt.*) for that area.
- African Paradise Flycatcher *Terpsiphone viridis*. At forest edges (Jan 2005).
- Red-bellied Paradise Flycatcher *Terpsiphone rufiventer*. In forest understorey.
- Brown Illadopsis *Illadopsis fulvescens*. Several singing/calling in forest understorey.
- Puvel's Illadopsis *Illadopsis puveli*. Several singing (and seen) in forest understorey.
- Tit-hylia *Pholidornis rushiae*. A family with fledged young (begging and fed) in secondary forest near the edge, in low canopy, Jan 2005. Several pairs or small family groups seen and heard in 2009, throughout the forested area and at edges.
- Fraser's Sunbird *Deleornis fraseri*. Encountered only in forest left of the dam, 2009.
- Green (Yellow-chinned) Sunbird *Anthreptes rectirostris*. Easily overlooked species of the canopy, identified on flowers of *Ceiba*, Jan 2009.
- Collared Sunbird *Anthreptes collaris*. Widespread in forest.
- Little Green Sunbird *Nectarinia seimundi*. Several in forest left of the dam (2009).
- Olive Sunbird *Nectarinia olivacea*. Widespread in forest.
- Blue-throated Brown Sunbird *Nectarinia cyanolaema*. In forest canopy.
- Buff-throated Sunbird *Nectarinia adelberti*. Several at forest edges and farmbush (2009).
- Olive-bellied Sunbird *Nectarinia chloropygia*. At forest edges and secondary growth.
- Tiny Sunbird *Nectarinia minulla*. Identified by its early morning song, in tall forest left of the dam (2009).
- Johanna's Sunbird *Nectarinia johannae*. At least a pair in the canopy of tall forest left of the dam (2009). Also one pair seen flying into the edge from outside (apparently coming from a patch of secondary forest at least 500 m distant, across farmbush).
- Superb Sunbird *Nectarinia superba*. One at forest edges (2005).

- Black-winged Oriole *Oriolus nigripennis*. In forest canopy near the powerline and left of the dam.
- Marsh Tchagra *Tchagra minutus*. One or two alarming in tall grass near the lake and stream.
- Red-billed Helmet Shrike *Prionops caniceps*. Confined to tall forest left of the dam (2009), where also listed by P. Beier (*in litt.*).
- Velvet-mantled Drongo (Fork-tailed Drongo) *Dicrurus (adsimilis) modestus*. In forest canopy (this is the forest form *modestus* of Fork-tailed Drongo, often considered a separate species).
- Pied Crow *Corvus albus*. Near the picnic site.
- Copper-tailed Glossy Starling *Lamprotornis cupreocauda*. Probably a visitor, with one bird flying over tall forest beyond the dam, 4 Jan 2009.
- Splendid Glossy Starling *Lamprotornis splendidus*. Common in forest (both visits).
- Black-necked Weaver *Ploceus nigricollis*. In low secondary forest and edges.
- Vieillot's Black Weaver *Ploceus nigerrimus*. In secondary growth outside forest.
- Blue-billed Malimbe *Malimbus nitens*. Encountered several times in understory of tall forest left of the dam, in parties, with also one fledgling fed (2009).
- Crested Malimbe *Malimbus malimbicus*. Seen in a mixed party in thicket on edge of forest left of the dam, Jan 2009.
- Red-vented Malimbe *Malimbus scutatus*. A noisy pair in canopy of *Raphia* outside the reserve, also visiting the canopy of tall forest left of the dam (2009).
- Red-headed Malimbe *Malimbus rubricollis*. One in the canopy of tall forest left of the dam (2009).
- Grey-crowned Negrofinch *Nigrita canicapillus*. In forest and at edges.
- Chestnut-breasted Negrofinch *Nigrita bicolor*. In forest and at edges.
- White-breasted Negrofinch *Nigrita fusconotus*. Singing at forest edges (2009).
- *Black-bellied Seedcracker *Pyrenestes ostrinus*. Two seen in Jul 1988 (Dutson & Branscombe 1990). A species of marshy edges.
- Western Bluebill *Spermophaga haematina*. In *Chromolaena* outside forest, and in thicket in a mixed party at forest edge.
- Green Twinspot *Mandingoa nitidula*. In thicket at forest edges, left of the dam (2009).
- Orange-cheeked Waxbill *Estrilda melpoda*. In farmbush at forest edges.
- Bronze Mannikin *Spermestes cucullata*. In secondary growth outside forest.
- Black-and-white Mannikin *Spermestes bicolor*. As for last species.

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APPENDIX 1. POTENTIAL OF OWABI FOR BIRD ECOTOURISM

Owabi occasionally features on the programme of professional bird tours, for example “Greentours” led by R. Cruse in UK. These groups stop in Kumasi on the way between Kakum and Mole, and visit Owabi only briefly. The sanctuary also holds some semi-tame mammals (we had excellent views of Campbell’s Monkeys and Cusimanse Mongooses), so it is obvious that Owabi could be profitably used for education of the general public and small school groups.

CHECKLIST OF THE BIRDS OF OWABI WILDLIFE SANCTUARY

Compiled by R.J. Dowsett & F. Dowsett-Lemaire (2009) (e-mail: Dowsett@aol.com)

The English names used generally follow the field guides by Borrow & Demey (2001, 2004. *Birds of Western Africa*. London: Christopher Helm). Abbreviations used: Res = Resident; = Irregular visitor; PM = Palaearctic (Eurasian) migrant; AM = Intra-African migrant; Ext = extinct (past record). The status of many species is poorly known, as we do not have reliable observations for all times of year.

Species.....	Status.....	Observations
Little Grebe <i>Tachybaptus ruficollis</i>	Res.....	
Long-tailed Cormorant <i>Phalacrocorax africanus</i>	Res/Irreg.....	
White-crested Tiger Heron <i>Tigriornis leucolopha</i>	Res.....	
Black-crowned Night Heron <i>Nycticorax nycticorax</i>	PM.....	
Squacco Heron <i>Ardeola ralloides</i>	PM.....	
Cattle Egret <i>Bubulcus ibis</i>	AM.....	
Green-backed Heron <i>Butorides striata</i>	Res.....	
Little Egret <i>Egretta garzetta</i> :	PM?.....	
Great (White) Egret <i>Egretta alba</i>	PM.....	
Purple Heron <i>Ardea purpurea</i>	PM.....	
Grey Heron <i>Ardea cinerea</i>	PM?.....	
Hamerkop <i>Scopus umbretta</i>	Res.....	
Openbill Stork <i>Anastomus lamelligerus</i>	Ext.....	
Spot-breasted Ibis <i>Bostrychia rara</i>	Res.....	
White-faced Whistling Duck <i>Dendrocygna viduata</i>	Res.....	
Spur-winged Goose <i>Plectropterus gambensis</i>	Ext.....	
Hartlaub's Duck <i>Pteronetta hartlaubi</i>	Ext.....	
African Pygmy Goose <i>Nettapus auritus</i>	Res.....	
Garganey <i>Anas querquedula</i>	PM.....	
African Cuckoo Hawk <i>Aviceda cuculoides</i>	Res.....	
European Honey Buzzard <i>Pernis apivorus</i>	PM.....	
Bat Hawk <i>Macheiramphus alcinus</i>	Res.....	
Yellow-billed Kite <i>Milvus migrans</i>	AM.....	
Palm-nut Vulture <i>Gypohierax angolensis</i>	Res.....	
Hooded Vulture <i>Necrosyrtes monachus</i>	Res.....	
Congo Serpent Eagle <i>Dryotriorchis spectabilis</i>	Res.....	
African Harrier Hawk <i>Polyboroides typus</i>	Res.....	
Black Sparrowhawk <i>Accipiter melanoleucus</i>	Res.....	
African Goshawk <i>Accipiter tachiro</i>	Res.....	
Lizard Buzzard <i>Kaupifalco monogrammicus</i>	Res.....	
Crowned Eagle <i>Stephanoaetus coronatus</i>	Ext.....	
Osprey <i>Pandion haliaetus</i>	PM.....	
Grey Kestrel <i>Falco ardosiaceus</i>	Res.....	
African Hobby <i>Falco cuvieri</i>	Res.....	
Lanner Falcon <i>Falco biarmicus</i>	Res.....	
Latham's Forest Francolin <i>Francolinus lathamii</i>	Res.....	
Ahanta Francolin <i>Francolinus achantensis</i>	Res.....	
Nkulengu Rail <i>Himantornis haematopus</i>	Res.....	
White-spotted Flufftail <i>Sarothrura pulchra</i>	Res.....	
Black Crake <i>Amaurornis flavirostra</i>	Res.....	
Purple Swamphen <i>Porphyrio porphyrio</i>	Res.....	

Species.....	Status.....	Observations
African Finfoot <i>Podica senegalensis</i>	Res.....	
African Jacana <i>Actophilornis africana</i>	Res.....	
Green Sandpiper <i>Tringa ochropus</i>	PM.....	
Common Sandpiper <i>Actitis hypoleucos</i>	PM.....	
Laughing Dove <i>Streptopelia senegalensis</i>	Res.....	
Vinaceous Dove <i>Streptopelia vinacea</i>	AM (dry season).....	
Red-eyed Dove <i>Streptopelia semitorquata</i>	Res.....	
Blue-spotted Wood Dove <i>Turtur afer</i>	Res.....	
Tambourine Dove <i>Turtur tympanistria</i>	Res.....	
Blue-headed Wood Dove <i>Turtur brehmeri</i>	Res.....	
African Green Pigeon <i>Treron calvus</i>	Res.....	
Grey Parrot <i>Psittacus erithacus</i>	Irreg.....	
Red-fronted Parrot <i>Poicephalus gulielmi</i>	Irreg.....	
Yellow-billed Turaco <i>Tauraco macrorhynchus</i>	Res (Ext. by 2009).....	
Green Turaco <i>Tauraco persa</i>	Res (marginal).....	
Great Blue Turaco <i>Corythaeola cristata</i>	Irreg/Ext.....	
Red-chested Cuckoo <i>Cuculus solitarius</i>	Res.....	
African Emerald Cuckoo <i>Chrysococcyx cupreus</i>	Res.....	
Klaas's Cuckoo <i>Chrysococcyx klaas</i>	Res.....	
Yellowbill (Green Coucal) <i>Ceuthmochares aereus</i>	Res.....	
African Black Coucal <i>Centropus grillii</i>	AM/Res?.....	
Black-throated Coucal <i>Centropus leucogaster</i>	Res.....	
Blue-headed Coucal <i>Centropus monachus</i>	Res.....	
Barn Owl <i>Tyto alba</i>	Res.....	
Fraser's Eagle Owl <i>Bubo poensis</i>	Res.....	
Red-chested Owlet <i>Glaucidium tephronotum</i>	Res.....	
African Wood Owl <i>Strix woodfordii</i>	Res.....	
Narina's Trogon <i>Apaloderma narina</i>	Res.....	
Shining-blue Kingfisher <i>Alcedo quadibrachys</i>	Res.....	
Malachite Kingfisher <i>Alcedo cristata</i>	Res.....	
Chocolate-backed Kingfisher <i>Halcyon badia</i>	Res.....	
Blue-breasted Kingfisher <i>Halcyon malimbica</i>	Res.....	
Woodland Kingfisher <i>Halcyon senegalensis</i>	Res.....	
Giant Kingfisher <i>Megaceryle maxima</i>	Res.....	
Pied Kingfisher <i>Ceryle rudis</i>	Irreg.....	
Black Bee-eater <i>Merops gularis</i>	Res.....	
White-throated Bee-eater <i>Merops albicollis</i>	AM.....	
Broad-billed Roller <i>Eurystomus glaucurus</i>	AM.....	
Blue-throated Roller <i>Eurystomus gularis</i>	Res.....	
White-crested Hornbill <i>Tropicranus albocristatus</i>	Res.....	
Black Dwarf Hornbill <i>Tockus hartlaubi</i>	Ext.....	
African Pied Hornbill <i>Tockus fasciatus</i>	Res.....	
African Grey Hornbill <i>Tockus nasutus</i>	AM (dry season).....	
Piping Hornbill <i>Bycanistes fistulator</i>	Irreg.....	
Yellow-casqued Hornbill <i>Ceratogymna elata</i>	Ext.....	
Naked-faced Barbet <i>Gymnobucco calvus</i>	Res.....	
Bristle-nosed Barbet <i>Gymnobucco peli</i>	Res.....	
Speckled Tinkerbird <i>Pogoniulus scolopaceus</i>	Res.....	
Yellow-throated Tinkerbird <i>Pogoniulus subsulphureus</i>	Res.....	
Red-rumped Tinkerbird <i>Pogoniulus atroflavus</i>	Res.....	
Hairy-breasted Barbet <i>Tricholaema hirsuta</i>	Res.....	
Vieillot's Barbet <i>Lybius vieillotii</i>	Res.....	
Double-toothed Barbet <i>Lybius bidentatus</i>	Res.....	
Spotted Honeyguide <i>Indicator maculatus</i>	Res.....	

Species.....	Status.....	Observations
Lesser (Thick-billed) Honeyguide <i>Indicator minor conirostris</i>	Res	
Buff-spotted Woodpecker <i>Campethera nivosa</i>	Res	
Fire-bellied Woodpecker <i>Dendropicos pyrrhogaster</i>	Res	
Rufous-sided Broadbill <i>Smithornis rufolateralis</i>	Res	
Rufous-chested Swallow <i>Hirundo semirufa</i>	Res	
Lesser Striped Swallow <i>Hirundo abyssinica</i>	Res	
Barn (European) Swallow <i>Hirundo rustica</i>	PM	
African Pied Wagtail <i>Motacilla aguimp</i>	Res	
Plain-backed Pipit <i>Anthus leucophrys</i>	Irreg	
Little Greenbul <i>Andropadus virens</i>	Res	
Little Grey Greenbul <i>Andropadus gracilis</i>	Res	
Cameroon Sombre Greenbul <i>Andropadus curvirostris</i>	Res	
Slender-billed Greenbul <i>Andropadus gracilirostris</i>	Res	
Yellow-whiskered Greenbul <i>Andropadus latirostris</i>	Res	
Honeyguide Greenbul <i>Baeopogon indicator</i>	Res	
Simple Leaflove <i>Chlorocichla simplex</i>	Res	
Swamp Palm Bulbul <i>Thescelocichla leucopleura</i>	Res	
White-throated Greenbul <i>Phyllastrephus albigularis</i>	Res	
Grey-headed Bristlebill <i>Bleda canicapillus</i>	Res	
Western Bearded Greenbul <i>Criniger barbatus</i>	Res	
Red-tailed Greenbul <i>Criniger calurus</i>	Res	
Common Bulbul <i>Pycnonotus barbatus</i>	Res	
Western Nicator <i>Nicator chloris</i>	Res	
Finsch's Flycatcher Thrush <i>Stizorhina fraseri finschi</i>	Res	
Fire-crested (White-tailed) Alethe <i>Alethe diademata</i>	Res	
Forest Robin <i>Stiphrornis erythrothorax</i>	Res	
Forest Scrub Robin <i>Erythropgyia leucosticta</i>	Res	
Little Rush Warbler <i>Bradypterus baboecala</i>	Res	
Great Reed Warbler <i>Acrocephalus arundinaceus</i>	PM	
Green Crombec <i>Sylvietta virens</i>	Res	
Lemon-bellied Crombec <i>Sylvietta denti</i>	Res	
Grey Longbill <i>Macrosphenus concolor</i>	Res	
Kemp's Longbill <i>Macrosphenus kempii</i>	Res	
Wood Warbler <i>Phylloscopus sibilatrix</i>	PM	
Green Hylia <i>Hylia prasina</i>	Res	
Whistling Cisticola <i>Cisticola lateralis</i>	Res	
Red-faced Cisticola <i>Cisticola erythrops</i>	Res	
Tawny-flanked Prinia <i>Prinia subflava</i>	Res	
Sharpe's Apalis <i>Apalis sharpii</i>	Res	
Grey-backed Camaroptera <i>Camaroptera brachyura</i>	Res	
Yellow-browed Camaroptera <i>Camaroptera superciliaris</i>	Res	
Olive-green Camaroptera <i>Camaroptera chloronota</i>	Res	
Spotted Flycatcher <i>Muscicapa striata</i>	PM	
Dusky-blue Flycatcher <i>Muscicapa comitata</i>	Res	
Grey-throated Flycatcher <i>Myioparus griseigularis</i>	Res	
Black-and-white Flycatcher <i>Bias musicus</i>	Res	
Chestnut Wattle-eye <i>Dyaphorophya castanea</i>	Res	
Blue-headed Crested Flycatcher <i>Trochocercus nitens</i>	Res	
African Paradise Flycatcher <i>Terpsiphone viridis</i>	AM	
Red-bellied Paradise Flycatcher <i>Terpsiphone rufiventer</i>	Res	
Brown Illadopsis <i>Illadopsis fulvescens</i>	Res	
Puvel's Illadopsis <i>Illadopsis puveli</i>	Res	
Tit-hylia <i>Pholidornis rushiae</i>	Res	
Fraser's Sunbird <i>Deleornis fraseri</i>	Res	

