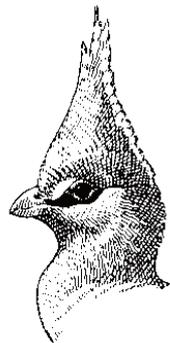


**Additional bird species recorded in Gbele
Resource Reserve (2010)**

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





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by Françoise Dowsett-Lemaire & Robert J. Dowsett

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RESULTS

On a short visit to Wahabu Camp on 16-17 April 2010, several bird species were added to the reserve's list of 2005. We stayed at the new tented camp (about 7 km north of the bridge on the Kulpawn, inside the reserve: 10° 25.173'N, 2° 04.453'W, alt. 223 m) and explored the riverside near the new camp, as well as around the bridge. We also mention below four other new species reported by Andrew Hester (*in litt.*) on a visit on 4-5 April 2007 to Wahabu and surroundings. In all, 16 species have been added, bringing the total to 210 species.

- White-backed Night Heron *Gorsachius leuconotus*. Seen by A. Hester, thicket on the Kulpawn river.
- Hadada Ibis *Bostrychia hagedash*. Heard on the river, close to the tented camp, 17 April. The camp leader Sufyani Sulemana had seen three ibises a few days earlier in the same area. This distinctive and noisy bird was unknown to Samson Mangu (based at Wahabu in the early years 2000), so possibly the species is a newcomer. It is common in Mole N.P. but otherwise quite scarce or local in Ghana.
- African Harrier Hawk *Polyboroides radiatus*. One at Wahabu.
- African Hawk Eagle *Hieraaetus spilogaster*. Seen by A. Hester.
- Common Greenshank *Tringa nebularia*. Palaearctic migrant noted by A. Hester.
- Levaillant's Cuckoo *Clamator levaillantii*. Singing in riparian vegetation.
- European Bee-eater *Merops apiaster*. Palaearctic migrant flying over the reserve regularly in April (northward passage).
- Barn Owl *Tyto alba*. Known to S. Sulemana from Gbele camp and village. Also present in the south: a nest recently deserted was seen on a platform under the bridge, with sticks and whitewash.
- African White-rumped Swift *Apus caffer*. Some around the bridge on the Kulpawn.
- Horus Swift *Apus horus*. Two came to drink in a pool of the Kulpawn river near the bridge, 17 April. Barely known in Ghana, this species normally breeds in bee-eater holes, so could well breed in Gbele.
- African Pygmy Kingfisher *Ceyx pictus*. In riparian thickets, in song in April (intra-African migrant, absent in the driest months, as for Levaillant's Cuckoo and Red-shouldered Cuckoo-shrike).
- Fanti Saw-wing *Psalidoprocne obscura*. Seen by A. Hester along the river.
- Red-shouldered Cuckoo-shrike *Campephaga phoenicea*. Males in song in riparian vegetation.
- Eurasian Reed Warbler *Acrocephalus scirpaceus*. At least one in shrubs by water, 17 April.
- Vitelline Masked Weaver *Ploceus (velatus) vitellinus*. A few (in non-breeding dress) came to drink in the river.
- Village Indigobird *Vidua chalybeata*. Some (in non-breeding dress) with Red-billed Firefinches.

Notes on selected species of interest:

Northern Carmine Bee-eater *Merops nubicus*. The main colony near Wahabu had been deserted, following the floods of 2009. The birds came to visit the colony in November-December (S. Sulemana pers.

comm.) then left. Zachariah Wareh (pers. comm.) from Mole N.P. informed us that colonies of bee-eaters that get flooded in years of exceptional rainfall may be abandoned, probably because the holes get filled with mud and debris.

Red-throated Bee-eater *Merops bulocki*. A colony in a riverbank near the tented camp was occupied, with several pairs feeding nestlings, 17 April. Another colony occupied for years near the Kulpawn bridge had been flooded and partly washed out in 2009 and was deserted.

Preuss's Cliff Swallow *Hirundo preussi*. The large colony under the bridge was not yet occupied, but over 100 birds roosted in the old nests. At least 60 holes were visible, in a great mud structure built on the side facing north.

The following species had not been recorded at Wahabu on our first survey, but only in the Gbele area (Kulpawn): Blue-breasted Kingfisher *Halcyon malimbica*, Pied-winged Swallow *Hirundo leucosoma*, Common Wattle-eye *Platysteira cyanea*, Northern Grey-headed Sparrow *Passer griseus* and Black-headed Weaver *Ploceus melanocephalus* (some old nests of the last over the river). The kingfisher and wattle-eye occur in small numbers only in the densest parts of the riparian vegetation and must be local.