

## Recent results from Barn Swallow *Hirundo rustica* ringing in Iringa, Tanzania

A Barn Swallow *Hirundo rustica* roost was discovered at Kihesa Kilolo Bwawani (7°43'S, 35°42'E) on 1 December 2004. The site is on the northern outskirts of Iringa about 7 km from the town centre. At dusk, thousands of birds were seen circling over the c.5 ha lake and, as is typical of the species (Curry-Lindahl 1963), they descended *en masse* to roost in the *Typha latifolia* fringing the lake just before it became dark. The estimated number of swallows at the roost that evening was 5,000-7,000.

On the evening of 15 December 2004 the Tanzania Bird Atlas Project team started ringing at this roost. In April 2005, having moved to a house beside the lake, we found that capture rates improved when nets were opened just before dawn to catch birds leaving the roost. Ringing activities continued until the swallows deserted the roost after the 2007 season. To date, 2,386 Barn Swallows have been ringed at this site.

In the first three months of 2007, three foreign-ringed birds were recovered at Kihesa Kilolo. They were ringed at the Chokpak Pass in Dzambul, Kazakhstan, Obrowiec in Gogolin, Poland, and at Lake Atanasovsko in Burgas, Bulgaria (Table 1). We have learnt from East African Ringing Reports (Backhurst 1972, 1973, 1974) that Barn Swallows were also ringed by J. F. Reynolds in the early 1970s at Kibebe Farm (7°46'S, 35°42'E), which is c.11 km from our site. Five of his birds were recovered in Uzbekistan, Germany, Russia, and Georgia (Table 2). Remarkably, on 5 February 1971, Reynolds also recovered a bird originally ringed from the Chokpak Pass in Kazakhstan, indicating that this population is still wintering or passing through this part of Africa almost 37 years later.

**Table 1.** Foreign-ringed Barn Swallow recoveries at Kibebe Farm (1970s) and Kihesa Kilolo (2007) in Iringa, Tanzania.

Ringed				Recovered	
Date	Site	Latitude	Longitude	Date	Site
24 April 1970	Chokpak Pass, Kazakhstan	42°31'	70°38'	5 February 1971	Kibebe
18 May 2005	Chokpak Pass, Kazakhstan	42°31'	70°38'	31 January 2007	Kihesa
9 August 2005	Obrowiec, Poland	50°28'	18°02'	27 March 2007	Kihesa
2 October 2006	Lake Atanasovsko, Bulgaria	42°34'	27°29'	5 February 2007	Kihesa

**Table 2.** Foreign recoveries of Barn Swallows ringed at Kibebe Farm, Iringa, in the early 1970s.

Date ringed	Date recaptured	Site	Latitude	Longitude
10 January 1970	7 June 1972	Nürnberg, Germany	49°27'N	11°05'E
5 February 1971	14 June 1972	Tamishi, Ochamchire Dist, Georgia	42°38'N	41°21'E
9 March 1971	5 September 1973	Akbulak, Orenburg, Russia	51°00'N	53°31'E
10 March 1971	17 June 1973	Derbent, Dagestan, Russia	42°03'N	48°18'E
27 March 1971	14 May 1971	Dzhuma, Samarkand, Uzbekistan	39°42'N	66°40'E

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## Notes on nesting herons and other birds of interest at Lake Kalemawe in northern Tanzania

Lake Kalemawe (northwest end: 38°5'S, 04°23'E) lies in the valley east of the South Pare Mountains and west of Mkomazi Game Reserve. It was created during colonial times by damming the southern end of the Kadando Swamp that drains the eastern slopes of the South Pare Mountains principally through the Yongoma and Higililu rivers. These rivers flow south into the Pangani River through the Mkomazi River between the South Pare and West Usambara Mountains. The swamp to the north of the lake is currently a large rice scheme. At high water the lake covers some 800 ha along the 520 m elevation contour.

Lake Kalemawe is not included in the gazetteer in Britton (1980) and no mention can be traced of it in the bird literature of the 1980s and 1990s although it has been counted by the Tanzania Bird Atlas Project (TBAP) team in the recent past, and was included in the 1995 waterbird count when only 2377 birds were counted (Baker 1997).

On 21 May 2004 the water level was still high after heavy rains. We took a canoe trip across the lake to visit a heronry just off the north-eastern shore. Among the extensive stands of water grass were some thousands of Lesser Moorhen *Gallinula angulata* and hundreds of Allen's Gallinules *Porphyrio alleni*; no attempt was made to look for nests of these species. However, some 30 active nests of Whiskered Tern *Chlidonias hybridus* were opportunistically seen, with clutches of between 2 and 3 eggs.

We found the heronry in a ring of *Acacia* trees, which was at the time isolated from the shore by the higher than usual water levels. The majority of nests were within the ring of trees; it was possible to push the canoe through