

## Comments concerning the type locality of the Vulturine Guineafowl *Acryllium vulturinum*

The Vulturine Guineafowl *Acryllium vulturinum* was described by Hardwicke (1834) from a specimen brought to London by Capt Probyn RN. The type locality was given simply as 'West Africa' (Probyn's presumed last port of call), though clearly this was an error as the species is found only in Eastern Africa. The specimen in question had been kept in captivity and appeared to be moulting when it died.

Friedmann (1930), aware of Hardwicke's error, proposed Tsavo in southeast Kenya as a more suitable type locality. Later Vincent (1933) sought to further correct the type locality based on Layard's visit to the East African coast in 1856–57. It appears that Layard in a letter confirmed seeing two live specimens (presumably in captivity) that had come from the east coast of Africa, a little to the northward of Zanzibar. Vincent felt that as within that area lay the Pangani District of Tanganyika, he proposed that the type locality be revised to there. Brooke (1976) in his list of specimens acquired by Layard referred to two specimens obtained from the Kenyan coast. Whether these were the two referred to in his letter is not clear, but certainly these were the first specimens since the one acquired by Capt Probyn.

The Vulturine Guineafowl is endemic to eastern Africa, occurring in dry *Acacia* and *Commiphora* scrub from northern Somalia, western and southern Ethiopia south through eastern Kenya to the Masai Steppe region of north-eastern Tanzania (inland from Pangani). Throughout much of its range it favours the red soil areas of East Africa, and is particularly numerous throughout Masailand, itself an area extending from south-eastern Kenya to north-eastern Tanzania. Despite occurring close to the Indian Ocean in some northern areas, it largely avoids the wetter coastal strip in both Kenya and Tanzania.

During the mid-19<sup>th</sup> century, ships calling at various points along the East African coast took on water and supplies wherever possible, and clearly this is how the first specimens of this unique guinea fowl were acquired. It would seem that at the time many coastal traders kept guinea fowl in captivity for food and potential sale to passing vessels. It is neither possible to pinpoint an exact locality for Probyn's specimen nor determine the country from which he acquired it. As such I would propose that the type locality of this species be restricted to the Masailand area of East Africa, from where all the pre-1860 specimens must clearly have originated.

### References

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*Scopus* 31: 40-41, November 2011

Received June 2010

## The Greater Flamingo *Pheonicopterus roseus* and other birds at the Kibimba rice scheme, eastern Uganda

Kibimba rice scheme in eastern Uganda was started in 1974, with an initial area of 650 ha but now covers an area of 1 040 ha and is under the management of Tilda Uganda Ltd, a privately owned company. Kibimba wetland consists of a long, narrow strip of swampy land surrounded by small hills. It is located about 7 km from Lake Victoria and about 4 km from Lake Kimira, which drains into Lake Kyoga. It is within the Lake Victoria climatic zone which is characterised by relatively high rainfall and small annual variation in temperature, humidity and wind (Nachuha 2006).

On 30 April 2010, I had accompanied students to Kibimba rice scheme for fieldwork when I saw a single Greater Flamingo *Pheonicopterus roseus* among other bird species including the Saddle-billed Stork *Ephippiorhynchus senegalensis* (10 individuals), Pink-backed Pelican *Pelecanus rufescens* (2), White Stork *Ciconia ciconia* (50), Fulvous Whistling Duck *Dendrocygna bicolor* (>200), African Spoonbill *Platalea alba* (12), Yellow-billed Stork *Mycteria ibis* (30), Grey Crowned Crane *Balearica regulorum* (35), hundreds of Cattle Egrets *Bubuculus ibis*, Little Egrets *Egretta garzetta* and Yellow-billed Egrets *E. intermedia*, and various small waders. These birds were located in a flooded block with water up to about 30 cm deep, in a field that was being prepared for ploughing. However, due to the bad weather conditions on that day I was unable to take any pictures.

On 8 May 2010 I travelled back to Kibimba and confirmed this record. During the second visit, the bird was standing alone and occasionally foraging, but this time in a dry rice block that had recently transplanted rice. Talking to one of the employees of the scheme, I was informed that the bird had been present since around February 2010. Greater Flamingos are easily distinguishable from Lesser Flamingos *P. minor* by their larger size and paler plumage. Their bill is pink with a restricted black tip, and the legs are entirely pink (Urban *et al.* 1986). Photographs for this observation were taken and can be accessed on Nature Uganda's website: [www.natureuganda.org](http://www.natureuganda.org).

The presence of the Greater Flamingo and other birds at Kibimba rice