

Common Scimitarbill *Rhinopomastus cyanomelas* parasitized by Greater Honeyguide *Indicator indicator*

In the property L.R. 2327/59, in Nairobi's Langata suburb, between 1968 and 1983, Common Scimitarbills *Rhinopomastus cyanomelas* nested irregularly in a cavity in the bole of an African Olive tree *Olea africana*. The cavity was c. 1.5 m above ground, with an observation panel that could be opened and shut in its side. On 23 February 1983, a clutch of three pale greenish blue scimitarbill eggs had been laid. On 25 February, a female Greater Honeyguide *Indicator indicator* was seen leaving the cavity which, on inspection, now contained a white egg of similar size to the scimitarbill's, which I assumed to be the honeyguide's. All three scimitarbill eggs had one small, roughly triangular, hole through the shell about the midpoint of its long axis that had not been there previously (Fig. 1). These damaged eggs were removed leaving the honeyguide egg. However, this was eaten by an Ochre Bush Squirrel *Paraxerus ochraceus* on the following day, after which for the next 28 years for which records were kept, scimitar-bills were never again seen on this property.



Figure 1. Common Scimitarbill *Rhinopomastus cyanomelas* egg punctured by a Greater Honeyguide *Indicator indicator* (photo: P. Davey).

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