

## Hooded Vultures at an abattoir in Kigali, Rwanda.

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In May 2021, I had occasion to visit an abattoir in Kigali, Rwanda, in the suburb of Nyabugogo at 1°56'S, 30°02'E, in the north-west corner of the city. The abattoir is managed by SABAN (Société d'Abattoir de Nyagature) and is surrounded by a wall and occupies an area of approximately 3 ha (Muhirwa *et al.* 2010). On 15 May, at 14h00, during a brief visit, there were vultures circling overhead as well as some feeding on a pile of rumen contents (Figure 1). I estimated there were approximately 50 Hooded Vultures *Necrosyrtes monachus* in a mixed group of birds that included a few each of Yellow-billed Stork *Mycteria ibis*, African Sacred Ibis *Threskiornis aethiopicus*, Hadada Ibis *Bostrychia hagedash*, Yellow-billed Kite *Milvus aegyptius* and Pied Crow *Corvus albus*, mostly in the air. On a similarly quick visit on 22 May, also at 14h00, I saw approximately 30 Hooded Vultures, with up to ten individuals (adults and immatures) pecking around a pile of rumen contents. It is noteworthy that there were no Hooded Vultures seen outside the abattoir, perhaps due to there being very little litter or waste allowed to accumulate in the town due to strict waste management legislation that includes a ban on single use plastics (Kabera, Wilson & Nishimwe 2019).

In their book (2011), Jean Pierre and Gaël Ruboneka Vande weghe note the occurrence of six species of vulture in the country, mostly on the eastern savannah side. They stated that the Hooded Vulture occurred over one-half of the country but

was seriously affected by poisoning campaigns aimed at controlling mammalian carnivores in the 1980s and 1990s. The authors note that the species could be seen at “slaughterhouses” and “around Kigali”. My observations confirm their continued use of slaughterhouses, but perhaps the relatively recent improvements to waste management have reduced foraging opportunities across the wider city. Visits to other abattoirs in the city may be informative.

### Acknowledgements

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### References

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**Figure 1:** Part of a group of approximately 50 Hooded Vultures observed feeding on rumen content with other avian scavengers at an abattoir in the Nyabugogo suburb of Kigali, Rwanda, on 15 May 2021.  
Photograph: Penny Hoets.

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