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## On the occurrence of the Alpine Swift *Apus melba* in Nigeria

The Alpine Swift *Apus melba* is a not uncommon to rare Palaearctic winter visitor to W Africa (Keith *et al.* 1988), whose winter distribution is not adequately known in the region (Borrow & Demey 2001). For Nigeria, the known distribution extends only to about 7° N. However, there are two records from Cameroon, at 4–5° N, close to the Nigerian border (Borrow & Demey 2001). Here, we add four observations of large flocks of Alpine Swifts from the Cross River National Park, in SE Nigeria, suggesting that the species may regularly winter in this region. Observations were part of an ornithological survey in the Okwangwo Division of the Cross River NP, conducted in the surroundings of Bashu Okpambe village (c. 6°6'N, 9°8'E) from 1 to 26 Nov 2006.

Our observations are as follows (with minimum number of birds recorded): two flocks, of 40 and 30 birds, 16 Nov; 50 birds, 20 Nov; five birds, 24 Nov. The first and

the third observations were made on hilltops (c. 200–300 m above sea level), whereas the others were of birds hunting over the village and its adjacent farmland. Identification of the species was based on size (considerably larger than the other swifts they were with, see below), the characteristic call (typical trilling call, well known to the authors from experience in central Europe), plumage characteristics (overall brown with a white throat patch and a large white patch on the belly; the two white patches separated by a smaller brown band) and flight (relatively slow wing beats compared to the smaller swifts). The larger flocks on 16 and 20 Nov also contained 1–5 Little Swifts *Apus affinis* and 1–5 Common or African Black Swifts *A. apus* or *A. barbatus*. As it has recently been suggested that the Alpine Swift may not actually breed in W Africa (Dowsett & Dowsett-Lemaire 2005), we assume that the observed birds were Palearctic visitors from NW Africa or Europe. We do not know whether this species occurs in this region throughout the winter.

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### African Barred Owlet *Glaucidium capense* new to Togo

Between 21h00 and 22h00 on 25 July 1989 I heard a series of calls noted as “drrrr-drrrr repeated many times” at Djodji (7°40'N, 0°35'E), Togo. The calls, often repeated during the hour I listened, were coming from the interior of thick secondary forest beside a track leading to the River Gban-Houa, also known as the River Wawa, where it acts as the border between Togo and Ghana. The forested area was populated with trees such as *Antiaris africana* and *Chlorophora excelsa*, but was patchy with some areas being logged. At the time I was unable to identify the memorable calls, which I