

15 lbs. Both the Tonga and Zulu peoples ascribe various medicinal qualities to Kigelia fruits.

4. POWERFUL EAGLE

Ndumu Game Reserve (June) Martial Eagle Polemaetus bellicosus.

Observation by A.C. Pooley.

On the morning of 16th June, when Dr. H.B. Anthony and I were driving slowly through the dense Mahemane thorn thicket area of the reserve, we surprised a Martial Eagle from cover on the ground next to the road. The bird flew up in front of us, but seemed unwilling to fly away and attempted to perch on a thorn tree ahead. We stopped the vehicle and going back found a freshly killed Red Duiker Cephalophus natalensis female, a few feet off the road. Examining the antelope carefully we found only one skin puncture, a mere slit a quarter of an inch long, on one side of its neck. Its tongue was swollen and lolling out, suggesting strangulation. Dr. Anthony carried out a post mortem on the carcass and found that the lungs were congested with blood, but without oxygen, whilst the tongue was also swollen with blood. It was clear that the eagle had succeeded in killing its prey by strangling it, probably with but one foot, of which only a single talon had penetrated the skin. The antelope was an adult female and its weight was estimated at 17 lbs.

5. TERRITORIAL JEALOUSY

Ndumu Game Reserve (January) Bateleur Terathopius ecaudatus.

Observation by T.P. Dutton.

On the morning of 30th January watched a fine flying display when a pair of Bateleurs attacked a fully mature Martial Eagle Polemaetus bellicosus. The latter was flying north over Lake INyamithi and seemed quite unconcerned by what looked like a hair-raising onslaught by the Bateleurs. To avoid apparently imminent collision the Martial Eagle, which did not appear to be carrying anything in its talons to provoke attack, merely spread his wings vertically and allowed his tormentors to pass harmlessly by at tremendous speed and at the closest of quarters. The combat continued until the birds disappeared from sight, and was presumably an outcome of some violation of territory.

6. EGG COVERING

Ndumu Game Reserve (March) African Jacana Actophilornis africanus

Observation by P.I. Phelan.

On the 26th March at about 1430 hrs a jacana was watched collecting water weeds and apparently adding to a cushion of such material already on a lily pad, before settling down on to it. After about five minutes the bird left, having been joined by

another and slightly larger individual presumed to be the male. It was then noticed that the cushion was a nest containing two eggs on the pad of weeds, and over them the male bird squatted rather than settled down, with his back to the wind. A short while later this bird carefully selected some weeds, throwing aside those it considered not up to standard, with which it covered over the eggs before flying off. The female then returned and shuffled down over the eggs, completely covering them. She brooded for only a few minutes, however, before flying off once more, this time to join her mate in a bath.

7. UNUSUAL WADER

Ndumu Game Reserve (August) Common Sandpiper Actitis hypoleucos.

Observation by G.W. Schütte.

At Lake INyamithi we approached very closely to some basking hippos, one large bull standing up in the shallows as we arrived. On his back was a common sandpiper which kept running to the hippo's head and pecking away at something which we thought might be snails or leeches. It was only when the hippo turned to face us that we noticed a sore, about three quarters of an inch in diameter between his ears. The bird kept pecking at this sore until its whole bill was covered in blood, and it looked as though the blood was actually being eaten, because no maggots or parasites could be seen, even at close quarters through binoculars.

8. RING RECOVERY

Ballito Bay, North Coast, Natal (May) Arctic Tern Sterna paradisaea.

Observation by A.A.E.P. Gifford.

A bird picked up dead on this beach on 6th May 1969 was found to be wearing a ring inscribed "A 362448 Museum Zool HKI Finland." Subsequent correspondence with the University Museum, Helsinki, revealed that this Arctic Tern had been ringed on 23rd June 1968, at Gadden on the Aland Island of Brändö.

9. ANOTHER CLIFF NEST

Umfolozi Game Reserve (December) Ground Hornbill Bucorvus leadbeateri

Observation by M.G. Behr.

Some points of interest were noted at another hornbill's nest situated near the top of a vertical cliff and at about 400 feet from the ground. The entrance hole was nearly round and about 18 inches in diameter, but within was a cavity about 3 feet wide by 4 feet long. One egg, in which the chick could be heard squeaking, lay on a reasonably thick layer of leaves from the UmThomboti Spirostachys africana and the Gwarri Euclea natalensis. It was noticed that the hen bird made no attempt to cover the egg when quitting the nest. When this nest was first found, one early

MISCELLANEOUS NOTES OF NATURAL HISTORY INTEREST

1. BLOSSOM EATERS

Ndumu Game Reserve (September) Samango Monkey Cercopithecus mitis.

Observation by L.R. Holcroft.

On the 24th of the month, at about 1530 hrs, four samangos were watched eating at a flowering quinine tree Rauvolfia caffra, on the bank of the Pongolo River. The animals did not actually pick the flowers, but would grasp a bloom in a paw and take a few mouthfuls before moving on to another selected flower. This mode of eating was watched for a good twenty minutes, with the monkeys quite oblivious of the observer's presence in a vehicle no more than thirty yards from them.

2. UNUSUAL KILLING

Umfolozi Game Reserve (August) Lion Panthera leo,

Observation by M.G. Behr.

I accompanied Senior Ranger Bailey on horseback to a spot where a pride of lions were reported to have caught and killed a leopard. After locating the place, with its traces of hair and skin, we reconstructed the drama which seemed to have begun with the lions and leopard walking on a collision course on a game path. They had met where a bush had obscured approach, and at this point the leopard had obviously turned and fled. But the lions had given chase and the spotted cat had managed to scramble only into the lower branches of an UmThomboti before being caught from behind and torn out of the tree. The claw marks in the tree trunk suggested a tremendous struggle before the leopard had finally succumbed to its larger cousins. It remains a mystery whether the lions had actually eaten part of the leopard before moving off and leaving the remains to the scavengers of the bush. It is hard to accept that the lions had killed for any reason other than to eat their prey.

3. UNUSUAL MEAL

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Ndumu Game Reserve (March) Square-lipped Rhinoceros Ceratotherium simum

Observation by G.W. Schütte.

Close to Lake Banzi, where a sausage tree Kigelia pinnata overhung the road, a rhino stood in the track chewing one of the large, heavy fruits lying on the ground. When disturbed the animal walked off, leaving about half of the 'sausage' uneaten. Later the remainder had disappeared and spoor indicated that the rhino had returned to complete its somewhat unusual meal. For the benefits of those unfamiliar with the fruits of this strange tree, it should be remarked that the 'sausage' may be up to 2 feet long and 4 inches in diameter; they are also said to weigh up to