

Lammer 10, June 1969

Whether or not this was merely an isolated incident, or whether it was a warped individual that was responsible, or whether it is the usual method of reducing surplus males in a troop, can only be left open to conjecture at this stage. It is significant that my notice was recently brought to an identical incident, also involving an immature male, that was witnessed at the same spot by students from the University of Natal Wild Life Society Fieldwork Section, about three weeks later.

2. MIXED FEEDING

Umfolozu Game Reserve (May) Chacma Baboon *Papio ursinus*, et al.

Observation by Technical Officer P. M. Hitchins.

Several baboons were busying themselves feeding on the ripe fruits of *Ficus sycomorus*. Whilst they moved about in the trees numerous figs were dislodged and fell to the ground. Waiting below was a group of kudu, several nyala and warthogs, and a single grey duiker, all feeding on the fallen fruits. That all these animals eat the figs is well known, but it is unusual to see such a variety of species standing literally side by side for their fruit course!

3. VETERINARY AID

Ndumu Game Reserve (Oct.) Square-lipped Rhino *Ceratotherium simum*.

Observation by Veterinary Research Officer Dr. M. E. Keep.

A rhino carrying a snare was caught and treated. It was an adult male and the hippo type snare was round its head, passing into its mouth and behind the posterior horn. It was pulled tight and was causing severe venous congestion and swelling of the face. The wire had not cut into the skin and had probably not been on the rhino very long. The snare was removed, the wound in the mouth treated, and intramuscular antibiotics given. When examined three hours after the antidote had been given, the face swelling had almost completely gone and the animal was standing normally. By the next morning he had walked away from the area.

4. COURTING DISPLAY

Ndumu Game Reserve (November) Goliath Heron *Ardea goliath*.

Observation by Ranger G. W. Schütte.

Watching two Goliath Herons recently I was fortunate enough to see what appeared to be a courting display accompanied by a most unexpected noise from a heron, that sounded very like a hippo at a distance. One bird, presumably the male, would stride towards the other, the latter standing with the neck fully extended while the "male" came closer. He would then slowly extend his neck with his beak pointing vertically into the air, when suddenly his throat would

distend and a call of "Mmmmmmm-haw-haw-haw-haw" would be uttered, the first note a fairly high one followed by the four sharp throaty "haws". After the call he would gradually lower the neck, still extended, until his throat touched the water and his beak pointed at the mate. This whole performance was several times repeated.

5. AVIAN SPIVS

St. Lucia Lake (November) Goliath Heron *Ardea goliath*.

Observation by Ranger B. D. L. Thring.

A goliath heron being watched by visitors on a launch tour was seen to catch a fair-sized fish, whereupon there was an immediate rush to the spot by another of the same species, two Pink-backed Pelicans, a Grey Heron, and a Fish Eagle, all of which had been resting on a nearby sand bar. While the eagle dive-bombed from above, the two herons alighted in the water on either side, and the two pelicans landed right in front of the goliath and started snapping at it. It stood aloof for a few seconds, but then had to drop the fish to defend itself. One pelican promptly caught up the fish in its bill and flew back to the sand bar, followed by all the other would-be thieves. All assumed their original positions and sat staring at the goliath heron they had robbed, just as though nothing had happened.

6. BARE PARTS COLOUR CHANGES

Ndumu Game Reserve (January) Great White Egret *Egretta alba* and Yellow-billed Egret *Egretta intermedia*.

Observation by Ranger G. W. Schütte.

Much has been written of the bill and feet colour change in the breeding season of the Cattle Egret *Bubulcus ibis* but not, apparently of the two species listed above. It was interesting, therefore, to note that both breeding sexes of the *E. alba* showed the black bill and prominently green lores. In the case of *E. intermedia* the lores were again markedly greenish, whilst the normally clear yellow bill and upper tarsi were distinctly red. In both cases excellent colour photographs were obtained.

7. UNUSUAL FEEDING

(a) Hluhluwe Game Reserve (May) Cattle Egret *Bubulcus ibis*.

Observation by Research Officer J. Vincent.

Some half dozen cattle egrets were watched catching bees which had been attracted to the juices in the flowers of a large *Euphorbia ingens*. The birds were perched somewhat jauntily and very precariously on the tips of the branches, and were gingerly reaching out to the adjacent flowers where bees could be seen flying around. They made stabs at the insects either in the air, when the birds invariably over-balanced, or when they settled on the flowers.