

depository for the eggs becomes flattened out with use and is built up again with soft fresh material at the same or some other point of the platform before each new laying; the sides of this cavity are so high and steep that it is impossible to see inside until one is alongside, or in some cases actually on the platform itself.

The seven eggs, and six others obtained subsequently from the same lake range in length from 62.4 to 72.5 and in width from 43.7 to 46.1 with means of  $66.4 \pm 0.82$  and  $44.6 \pm 0.19$  mm. respectively.

The eggs of the Giant Coot may be described in terms of the Ridway colour code as follows:

Ground colour between "pale mouse grey" and "pale olive grey", but paler than either, with numerous fine and a few large spots of "dark vinaceous brown". There are also a few underlying markings of "pale lilac". Some eggs show overlying areas of light "snuff brown" which I am inclined to attribute to nest stain.

## *Acrocephalus dumetorum* in Africa

by K. D. SMITH

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Kenneth Williamson, when going through material in the British Museum, found two specimens of Blyth's Reed Warbler (*Acrocephalus dumetorum*), previously unknown in Africa, which had been wrongly labelled as *Acrocephalus s. scirpaceus*. One was collected by myself at Zula, Eritrea, on 26th January, 1952; the other was taken in French Equatorial Africa on 26th March, 1953. The Zula bird was a male with enlarged testes, and was one of many small unstreaked acrocephaline warblers which were found wintering in the mangroves in coastal Eritrea. On the basis of the original identification it was assumed that *A. s. scirpaceus* was a common winter visitor and recorded as such; however, it seems feasible that the other birds wintering in the swamps may have been *dumetorum* as well. To the best of my knowledge *A. s. scirpaceus* is otherwise unknown in Eritrea and should be deleted, although several specimens of *A. s. fuscus* have been taken inland but not in coastal mangroves.

### References:

Smith, K. D. Recent records from Eritrea, *Ibis*, 97:65-80 (1955).

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