

The Diaries of James Chapin: Book 4

Book 4: (April. 8, 1910 - April 18, 1910)

DATE: 4/8/1910 (Friday)

LOCALITY: Left Banda III somewhere about noon, and reached Medje between three and four o'clock.

For some distance along the road were fresh elephant and buffalo tracks. A flock of six small green parakeets, like we collected at Gamangui, was seen flying by, giving their continuous finch-like notes. A drongo shrike (we have seen but one species thus far) was observed pecking at a large cicada, which it apparently held under one foot when not actively engaged. This cicada is very common in the forest and is known to the Mangbetu as "nyi-nye-nye", while they imitate its song fairly well, as follows "Nye-nye-nye-nye-nya-nya-yayayayaaaa..." Tiger-beetles of three or four species were very common all the way up to Medje, and lots of millipedes (all of the same species) were also noticed. In one place, a couple of hundred, at least, were walking about in a space some 2 or 3 yards indiameter. A flock of about 10 weavers, of the larger black-headed, brown-backed species, was observed; the first I have seen for a long time, perhaps since leaving N'Gayu. (See Illustration)

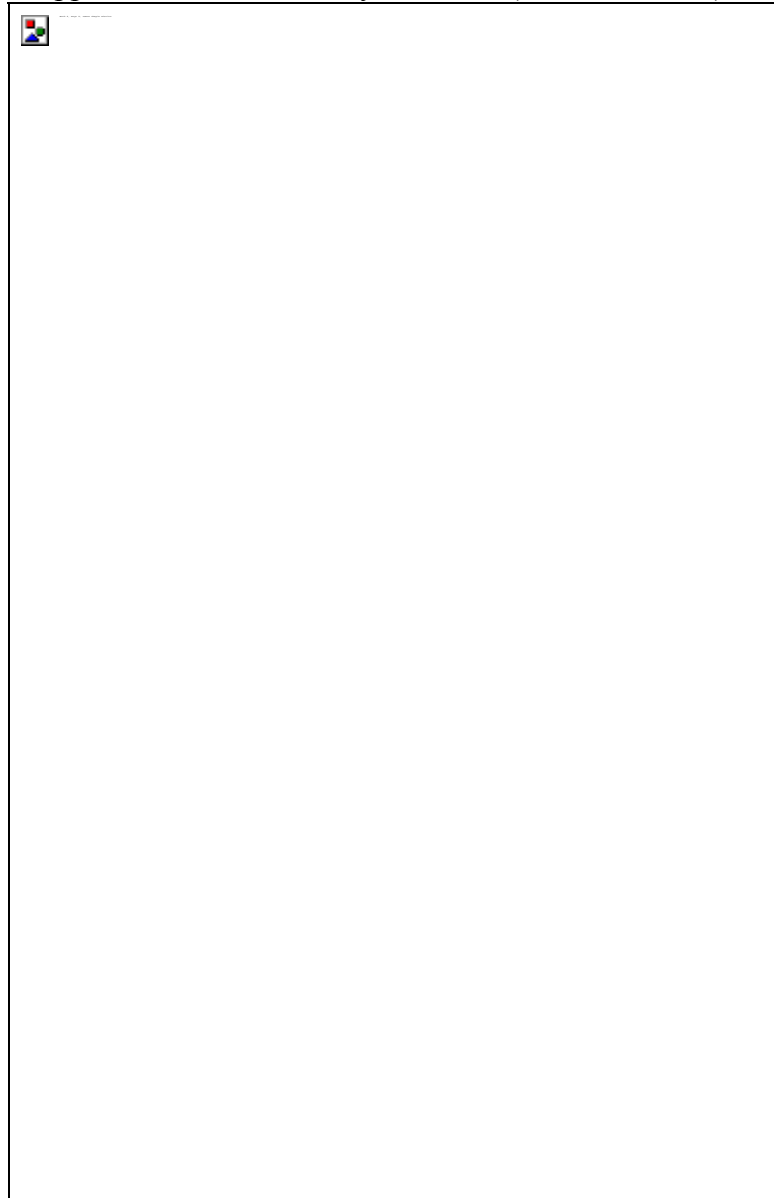


One of the light brown "forest crabs" (*P. floweri*) was seen crossing the road in a damp portion, and three small brown-backed lizards defied all my efforts to capture them. When we arrived at the post, a kite, of course, was sailing about overhead and a couple of rollers (*Eurystomus afer*) were giving their harsh "raaack, raaack, raaaak-k-k-k".

DATE: 4/9/1910 (Saturday)

LOCALITY: Medje.

Spent day packing my things for the trip to Avakubi, Mr. Boyton leaves the day after tomorrow. Early this morning in the open place near the Mess a pratincole was feeding, and would allow one to approach with some thirty feet of it. (See Illustration)



DATE: 4/10/1910 (Sunday)

LOCALITY: Medje to Banda II, 11am to 3pm.

Not many birds seen, but principally because I did not look for them. Almost the whole way is forest with plenty of streams -24 budes, I believe- which Mr. Vergruyssen ("Mambuti") has just been renewing. At Banda he has also built a new gite d'etap. In front of this house stands a high tree with a small colony of black weavers (the species with female greenish) nesting in it. Rollers (of the ordinary yellow billed kind), large resplendent starlings, the large white-rumped chaetura, fruit pigeons, and many other common birds were noticed here, and one flycatcher, black above, with white belly, yellow eyes, long crest, and white patches in the wings. A pair of them lit in a low tree near the houses. Among the insects caught around the light at night was a small brownish cicada with transparent wings. There must be at least five cicadas in these parts.

DATE: 4/11/1910 (Monday)

LOCALITY: Banda to Ibambi, 9:20 to 2:30.

Until one gets to the village about 2 1/2 hours from Banda, the country is much the same as yesterday. After that there are woods only in the hollows, and on the higher places, tall grass, oil palms; and other scattered trees. It was in one of these open places that I saw a pair of large weavers, much the size and shape of cowbirds, that we have not yet secured. (See Illustration)



The male cling to a grass stalk, with half open wings, evidently courting the female. Several other

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dark birds, perhaps the same, were seen near the same place. At the little village already mentioned I found Mr. Vergruyssen. He had a young genet, and a young monkey (black, with tuft of hair on head, and grayish at sides of face. *Cebus*) which the natives had brought him alive. The former he gave to me (female, juvenile; TL 48.5cm, LT 23.5, LH 56, LE 31). At this village we also saw 4 yellow breasted wagtails and a kite (with yellow bill). Further on two small flocks of little red-billed weavers, with finely barred brown backs, and pinkish breasts were seen, three long-tailed flycatchers were heard, a flock of 25 or 30 *Riparias* was observed, and a number of the little black swallows with white under wing-coverts and deeply forked tail. At Ibambi I found Mr. Guyon, who came up the Congo in the same steamer with us. Here there was another kite, a yellow-breasted wagtail, and some large brown-rumped swallows. Yesterday and today comparatively few tiger-beetles were to be seen on the road, but there were some of the same millipede noted on Apr. 8. One large *Nepa* was found in a puddle today. This morning a black and white vulture was observed at Banda, and 4 or 5 *Chrysococcyx smaragdineus* were heard along the way.

DATE: 4/12/1910 (Tuesday)

LOCALITY: Ibambi to Babonde, 8:30 to 1:00.

After leaving Ibambi, we soon left the old road to Wanseani, and turned into the forest toward Mr. DeBecker's post. As we neared this the country became more thickly settled and more open, with many palms, and a little high grass, while only the damp hollows are forested. Here all the natives (*Mabudus*) came out to meet us, and told me that "Mandefu" had gone away this morning. However, he had not gone far, and one of his messengers, dispatched with a note, returned in a couple of hours with orders to get my porters the next morning.

DATE: 4/13/1910 (Wednesday)

LOCALITY: Babonde-Bafwaboka.

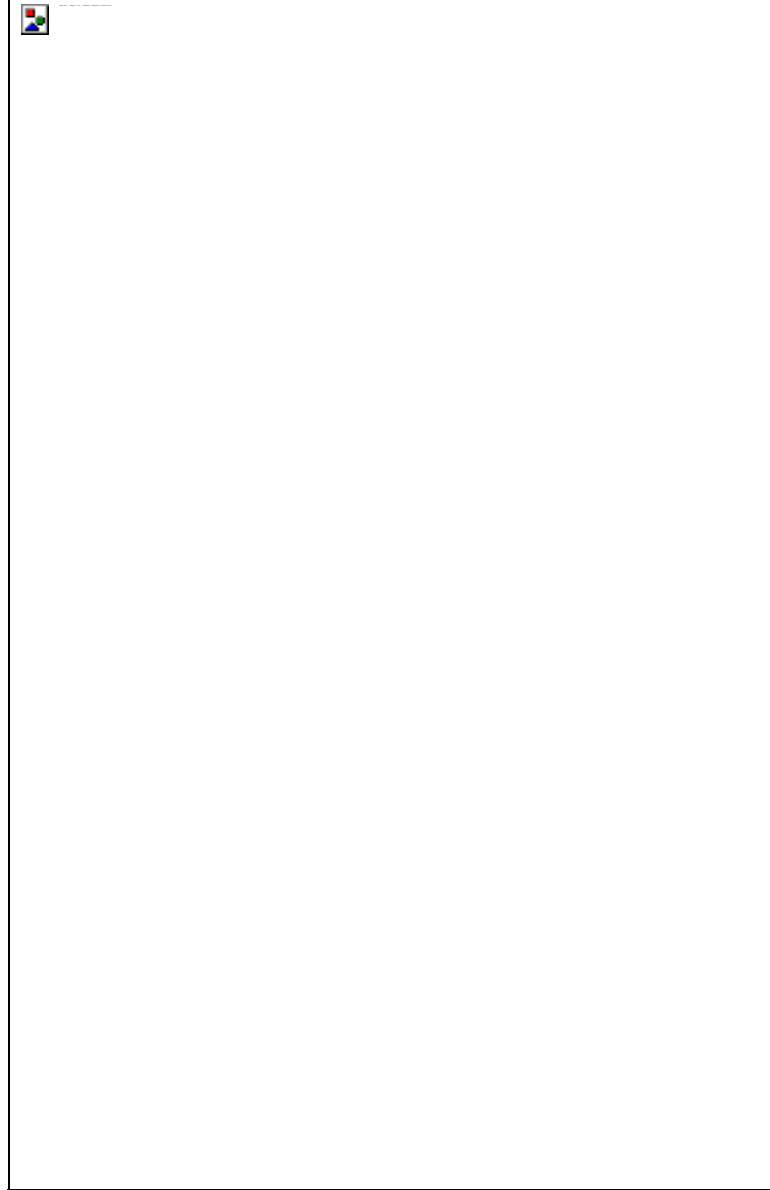
From Babonde to the River Malika are many villages, and the country not densely forested, save in the hollows but from the Malika to Bafwaboka one passes thru a large tract of forest, walking often in the beds of brooks, for the route has not been opened long, and has no bridges.

DATE: 4/14/1910 (Thursday)

LOCALITY: Waited at Bafwaboka till 2pm for porters.

Missies Boynton and Sifter arrived from Meg, and I slept in a village an hour or two off on the other side of the Nope. A pratincole (female, ovary not enlarged) was shot in the post in the morning and six cattle herons, 2 with a little buff on crown and back, were seen on the rocks in the Nope. About noon a stork was feeding on the ground, in a recently cleared spot at one side of the post. It was shot and another was seen to alight in a tree not far off. They were probably Cocoon

abide. A color sketch was made of the head. (See Illustration)



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DATE: 4/15/1910 (Friday)

LOCALITY: Zabili (=Djabir, an Azande) to Manamama.

DATE: 4/16/1910

LOCALITY: Manamama-N'Gayu.

At Fundi Bule I shot two gray cuckoos, like the one Mr. Planche got for us at N'Gayu last December. At N'Gayu I found Mr. Remy, who invited me for dinner. In the evening as I walked back toward the gite d'etape there was a continuous hum produced by the wings of a multitude of hawk moths.

DATE: 4/17/1910

LOCALITY: N'Gayu-Bokwandia.

DATE: 4/18/1910

LOCALITY: Bokwandia-Mongalula.

Two individuals of a curious cuckoo, with long tail and barred under parts were seen today in the forest. They utter a sort of whistled note of three syllables (*Cercococcyx mechowi*).

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