Tanzania Red-billed Hornbill *Tockus ruahae* feeding on a Giant Water Bug

The Tanzania Red-billed Hornbill *Tockus ruahae* is endemic to Tanzania, where it is widely distributed in central and southern parts of the country. It was described only recently by Kemp & Delport (2002), who suggested it might deserve full species status. Although it was then treated by Kemp (2005) and Dickinson & Remsen (2013) as a subspecies, it is now recognized by some authors as a separate species *T. ruahae* (e.g. by Sinclair & Ryan 2010).

On 20 December 2015 while birding at the Golden Pride Project area, a gold mine located in Nzega District, Tabora Region (33°11′–33°13′E, 4°04′–4°05′S), I saw an individual *T. ruahae* perching on a wire fence (Fig. 1a). It later flew into a shallow seasonal pool of water 8 m away (Fig. 1b) where it caught a Giant Water Bug (Order Hemiptera, Family Belostomatidae) in its beak (Fig. 1c). The bird walked away from the pool, ingested the bug (Fig. 1d) and flew away. Since the habits of *T. ruahae* have not been well documented, it is my hope that this record will add to what is known about its feeding ecology.

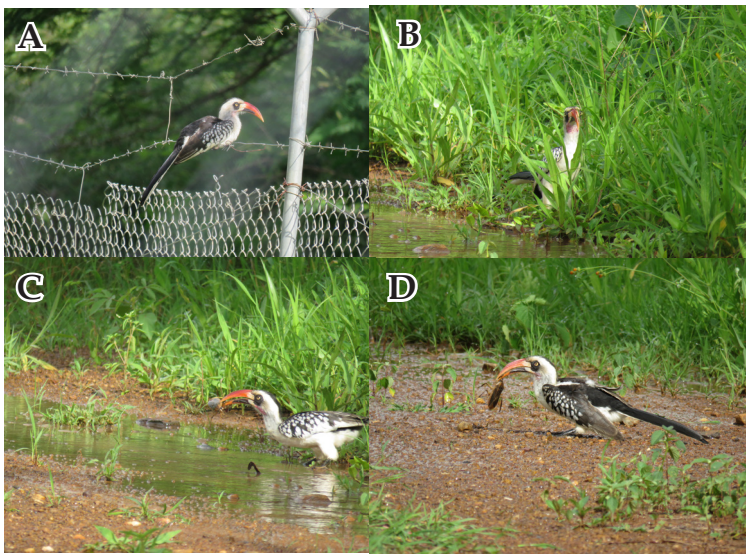


Figure 1. Tanzania Red-billed Hornbill *Tockus ruahae*, perching on a fence (a), in a shallow temporary pond (b), with a Giant Water Bug in the pond (c), and with the bug out of water (d).

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References

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