

The nest and nestlings of Cape Verde Cane Warbler *Acrocephalus brevipennis*

Peter Castell

Cinq nids de la Rousserolle du Cap-Vert *Acrocephalus brevipennis* ont été trouvés à Santiago, aux îles du Cap Vert, du 25 au 27 octobre 1998. Ils étaient construits dans des roseaux, suspendus à deux tiges à une hauteur de 1,3 à 2,3 m. Certains nids contenaient des oeufs et un nid contenait trois jeunes tout juste éclos. Les jeunes, jusqu'alors non décrits dans la littérature, étaient nus et noirâtres, avec des commissures jaune pâle et une bouche jaune-orange. Ils avaient une tache ovale noire de chaque côté de la langue. Apparemment, les oeufs éclosent simultanément.

During 25–27 October 1998, I found five nests of Cape Verde Cane Warbler *Acrocephalus brevipennis* in the São Jorge valley, on the island of Santiago, Cape Verde Islands.

Each nest was constructed in reeds and suspended between two main reedstems, whereas most *Acrocephalus* warblers with similar nests, such as Reed *A. scirpaceus* and Great Reed Warblers *A. arundinaceus* usually suspend their nests between at least three stems. The lowest nest was 1.3 m above the ground and the highest was 2.3 m. The nests were intermediate in size between those of Reed and Great Reed Warblers.

On 27 October, the five nests contained: (1) a complete clutch of two eggs, (2) ready for eggs (almost ready on 25 October), (3) two eggs (only one on 25 October), (4) a full clutch of three eggs, and (5) three newly hatched young.

Neither Cramp¹ nor Hazevoet² include a description of the nestlings of this species. They are naked with dark, almost black, skin, pale yellow gape flanges and orange-yellow mouths, and two oval black markings in the mouth, one on either side of the tongue. They closely resemble the nestlings of other species of *Acrocephalus*. All three young were identical in size and hatching was, therefore, synchronous. ♀

References

1. Cramp, S. (ed) 1992. *The Birds of the Western Palearctic*. Vol 6. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
2. Hazevoet, C.J. 1995. *The Birds of the Cape Verde Islands: an annotated check-list*. B.O.U. Check-list No. 13. Tring: British Ornithologists' Union.

Fairlawn, 679 Chester Road, Great Sutton, South Wirral L66 2LN, UK.

1. Habitat of Cape Verde Cane Warbler *Acrocephalus brevipennis*, São Jorge valley, Santiago, Cape Verde Islands, October 1998 (Peter Castell)
2. Nest and eggs of Cape Verde Cane Warbler *Acrocephalus brevipennis* (Peter Castell)
3. Newly hatched nestlings of Cape Verde Cane Warbler *Acrocephalus brevipennis* (Peter Castell)

