of the feathers. Rump, white, a few feathers having sub-terminal "spear-head" sepia markings: upper tail-coverts white, with large sepia spots. Tail evenly barred white and sepia. about eight sepia bands. Primaries with outer webs black, inner ones medium-brown. The lower half of these inner webs were white, irregularly freckled with light grey-brown. Quills, white. Secondaries greyish-brown, edged and tipped with white: tertaries, as for back. Lesser and median wing-coverts, light brownish-grey, with darker shaft-stripes and irregular whitish edgings. Primary coverts, dull black, inner ones tipped with white. Axillaries, white barred with sepia. Chin, white. Chest, light grey-brown, other underparts whitish, faintly washed with dirty brown. Under tail coverts, white barred with sepia. Sides, as for chest. Bill, slightly recurved, had the terminal two-thirds pale rosy-pink (fading duller after death), outer third black. Iris. black. Legs and feet, very dark greenish-black. Length about 17½ inches: Length of bill, 5 inches. The smaller bird, presumably a first year juvenile, was largely similar; but the axillaries were pure white and the back a darker grey and less grey-brown. Length 15 inches: length of bill 4 inches.

THE LAMMERGEIER IN EASTERN AFRICA.

By Raymond Hook.

Not the least interesting of East African birds is the Lammergeier or Bearded Vulture, *Gypaetus barbatus.* Its original distribution in the old world covered all the great mountain chains, from the Spanish Sierras, the Pyrenees, Alps, Carpathians, Caucasus to the Himalayas and associated ranges; and from Abyssinia along the back-bone of Africa to the Drakenbergs. From this area, it has been exterminated in the Alps and probably in the Drakenbergs.

One of the largest of carnivorous birds, it has a wing spread of nine feet, and is of a dull blackish-brown above, and a buffish salmon below, and has a "beard" of stiff feathers beneath its beak. It is one of the few birds which show the "whites" of its eyes, in this case a brilliant crimson. It is an extraordinarily powerful and graceful flier, more or less the equal of the peregrine, which it much resembles on the wing, in spite of the great difference in size, though it has not the peregrine's mastery of extreme speed. Its long and diamond shaped tail distinguishes it from all similar birds, with the exception of the Egyptian vulture, which is much smaller and differently coloured. The first plumage, in which it leaves the nest, is a dull black all over. It is not known how long it takes to attain the adult plumage.

Their food appears to consist mainly of bones, judging by the dung which may be seen in the nest and its neighbourhood, which resembles that of a hyaena. It breaks them into sizeable pieces by dropping them from a height on to a flat rock, hence its old name, used in the Bible, of ossifrage. It is said to have killed a Greek philosopher by dropping a tortoise on him in this manner. The tongue is specialized and long, and is believed to be used to lick out marrow bones and possibly brains, a source of good food which is usually neglected by other scavengers. They appear to be able to utilize a carcase which has already been dealt with by vultures, to be "the last at the feast" like the hyaena. But in Abyssinia and the Himalayas they are known to gather round slaughter houses for any refuse which may be thrown out.

The Aryan Indians had a superstition that anyone on whom the Lammergeier's shadow fell would become a king, and certain obscure references to eagles and kings in the Iliad have been thought to mean that this idea was a part of the original Aryan heritage. The third of the Great Moguls of India, Himiayun, had a name compounded of "Himia", the Lammergeier, and the meaning of the name is " fortunate ", " august ".

In East Africa Lammergeiers are numerous in certain parts of the Abyssinian highlands. In Kenya, they have been reported from near Lake Rudolf, and are probably present on Mounts Nyiro and Kulal, and possibly in the Mathew's chain. They are frequently to be seen on Mount Kenya, less often on the Aberdares. An egg, now in the Coryndon Museum, was taken near Nanyuki some years ago; but it is not known if the birds are still breeding in that vicinity. The number of people who can identify the Lammergeier is singularly limited and no one of them has visited the site recently. A pair is resident southward from Lake Naivasha, and it is perhaps these birds which have occasionally been seen in Nairobi; but other birds are reported from the Chyulu Hills and that neighbourhood. They appear to exist in fair numbers on Mounts Kilimanjaro and Meru, and in the " Winter Hochland ", northward from Ngorogoro Crater.

It appears to be a perfectly harmless bird, and exists in such inaccessible places that it seldom comes in contact with man. The only danger to it appears to be poison, to which it is very susceptible, as poison remains inactive for a long time in any carcase, including the bones. Large portions of the areas inhabited by Lammergeiers are now National Parks, and it is to be hoped that the bird will there long continue to enjoy a peaceful existence.

THE OCCURRENCE OF A SPECIES OF CADDIS FLY, HELICOPSYCHE BREMI (TRICHOPTERA SERICOSTOMATIDAE), IN TROPICAL AFRICA.

By Bernard Verdcourt.

The genus *Helicopsyche*, first described by Bremi in 1848, is known from Southern Europe, Asia, Australia, New Zealand, and North and South America; but in spite of this wide distribution, it does not appear to have been recorded from Africa. The genus is a remarkable one for the fact that the larvae build cases which bear an astoundingly close resemblance to gastropod shells. These cases even have crevices which correspond to the umbilicus of a snail's shell. So close indeed is the similarity, that some of the cases were originally described as molluscs.

The species under consideration, which was very kindly identified as *Helicopsyche sp.* by Mr. D. E. Kimmins, of the British Museum (Natural History), was discovered in small numbers on the undersides of partially submerged rocks by the writer on the 25th of June, 1950, whilst searching for fresh water snails. The locality is the swift Kwamkuyu River, just above the point where it joins the River Ngurue and the River Sigi, close to Sigi at the foot of the Eastern Usambaras, Tanganyika Territory (1,500 ft.). The initial finding of these small creatures caused some excitement since at a preliminary glance they closely resembled species of *Valvata Mull.*, a genus of snails which has only been reported from Lake Chad, Somaliland, and Abyssinia so far as the Ethiopian region of the African continent is concerned. An examination

under a lens, however, showed that the shells were made of small grains of sand cemented together, and that the contained animals were arthropods. The shells were firmly attached to the rocks and occurred together with the snail *Cleopatra ferruginea* Lea, which is the only species the writer has been able to find in the streams of the Amani district. A figure is given of one of the largest specimens. Material has been retained by the British Museum (Natural History), and the rest will be deposited in the Coryndon Museum.

N.B.—Since writing the above a reference has been found to the occurrence of a species of *Helicopsyche* in the River Qué, West Lendu. E.v.Martens (1898, Deustch-Ost-Afrika, Band IV, abt. 1 "Beschalte Weichthiere", page 173) mentions Stuhlmann finding them there on the 22nd of September, 1891, and that the cases were 4 mm. broad and 2 mm. high.

West Lendu presumably refers to the Belgian Congo just West of Albert Nyanza.

FOUR NEW KENYA MOTHS.

By A. L. H. Townsend.

1. HEMITHEINAE.

PRASINOCYMA NEREIS. sp. nov.

♂ Frons, in a living specimen, bright crimson, with wide white lower edge. (This crimson colour becomes quickly dulled after death). Some white scales between bases of antennae. Palpi above slightly browner red than frons, white below. Forelegs brownish red in front, the hairs on tibial process yellowish. Second pair of legs paler: third pair white, with a short white hair-brush. Shaft of antennae whitish above, extreme tip pinkish, pectinations yellowish buff. Thorax and abdomen above concolorous with wings, white below.

Wings pale, slightly bluish green; very thinly scaled. Costa of forewing narrowly edged with yellowish-buff. All wings closely strigulated with silvery-white; strigulae larger and more definite between anal vein and inner margin of forewing, but forming no definite marginal spot. A small and inconspicuous cell-spot of green scales in the forewing, and a similar spot — not always present — in hindwing. Inner half of cilia concolorous with wings; tips silvery-white.

Underside silvery-white; a slightly greener tinge along costa of forewing, below the buff edging.

♀ Similar.

Length of forewing, both sexes, from base to apex, from 16 to 18 mm. Holotype ♂ and allotype ♀ in my collection: paratype ♂ in British Museum.

Locality: Nakuru, Kenya. Larva on *Acacia spp.*

2. *PRASINOCYMA ANADYOMENE sp. nov.*

♂ Frons bright, almost emerald green; a narrow white line at vertex. Palpi cinnamon red above, white below. Forelegs deep cinnamon red in front; second and third pairs paler. Hind tibia with a long brush of white hairs. Base and shaft of antennae pure white for basal half, then pinkish. Pectinations bright maize-yellow.