

effect on both birds, although they were not actually seen to drive off the intruders; these were, however, kept at bay by the numerous Kittlitz's Sand-plovers (*Charadrius pecuarius*) which I suspect were also nesting in the immediate vicinity.

On August 3, another visit was made to the colony when almost total desertion of the nests by the parent birds was the first indication that something was amiss. Practically every nest had been robbed and the few that had not, had been abandoned: the full clutch from only three nests showed signs of successful breeding, although the young birds were not to be seen. Several eggs were still stuck to the inside of the nests by means of the film of soda already mentioned; a large hole on top of each egg indicated how the contents had been removed. Other eggs similarly plundered were also found lying a few feet from the nests. No sign could be found of a four-legged predator and my earlier observations point to the Grey-headed Gulls as the most likely culprits.

#### Reference

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## AN UNUSUAL THREAT DISPLAY OF THE AFRICAN ELEPHANT

By

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Whilst visiting the Queen Elizabeth National Park in Western Uganda during December, 1959, the writer was fortunate in witnessing an unusual threat display by a young bull elephant (*Loxodonta africana*). Almost every herd that the writer came across at this time showed signs of excitement and frequent charges were made at the vehicle, possibly because it was a peak period for mating. Although elephants seem to breed all the year round, Perry (1953) concluded that they had a period of greater intensity from December to March.

Approaching one small herd quite closely, a young bull showed resentment at the presence of the vehicle and went through all the customary motions of threat without, however, actually making a determined charge. Even the typical sideways swing of the head as it sights its object with one eye, was not followed up with a charge. Whilst going through such motions it suddenly knelt down on all fours, and lifting one fore-leg, pawed the air with it. At the same time the mouth was held open with its trunk curled back over its head, and its male organ was also extruded.

The African Assistant Warden who was accompanying the observer stated that he had seen a similar display once or twice before, but as so few people appear to have done so, usually moving off at the first signs of aggressiveness on the part of an elephant, it seemed worthwhile recording.

Being so engrossed in this strange display, the writer omitted to take a photograph of it.

#### Reference

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