

But the study of the reversed under coverts will have to be carried much further before conclusions bearing on the classification of birds can be safely derived therefrom.

In conclusion, the author of this paper is glad to acknowledge the encouragement, advice, and help received from Mr. W. R. Ogilvie-Grant in the putting together of the records of his observations in a form for publication. The observations themselves were made quite independently and alone, the idea of making them having been derived from reading Mr. Pycraft's paper referred to in the introduction, and afterwards that of Sundevall.

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XXIX.—*Notes on recently described Races of Siamese and Malayan Birds, with a Description of one new Race.*

By HERBERT C. ROBINSON, M.B.O.U., and C. BODEN KLOSS, M.B.O.U.

WITHIN the last few months a considerable number of races of Malayan and Siamese birds have been described in various periodicals, English and Foreign, by E. C. Stuart Baker, Count Nyls Gyldenstolpe, Dr. E. Hartert, H. Oberholser, and Lord Rothschild.

As the collections of birds from these regions that are either embodied in the collection of the Federated Malay States Museums, and collected by us, or have passed through our hands, are very large indeed, while in some instances the races are actually founded on duplicates from our collections, some remarks on certain of these species may possibly be of interest.

In the first place, it may not be amiss to observe that in some cases a certain laxity is apparent in the quotation of precise type-localities, though this, of course, is not entirely to be laid to the door of the describer. Localities which are quite familiar to the original collector, who in many cases may have collected entirely for his own edification, and which may even be readily traceable by local residents, are very frequently not to be found in any map at



the disposal of a home zoologist, who is therefore forced to cite, sometimes erroneously, the names of mere hamlets not found on any other than a large-scale topographical map and probably applying to several different places. In some instances, through this cause, the ascribed locality is totally erroneous.

In the case of races from the kingdom of Siam this procedure is peculiarly undesirable and misleading, as Siam is not a distinct zoological province, the fauna of the peninsular portion of it being purely Malayan, while that of the north is almost identical with that of the Shan States and that of the central area with Tenasserim.

Another practice that is becoming increasingly common is the omission of precise differential characters. A race is often described as larger or smaller than that with which it is compared, and dimensions are, of course, usually given. But the dimensions of the compared form are almost invariably omitted.

It is rare, moreover, for the describer to state of what number of specimens his series consists and with how many specimens of the allied form he has compared it. These details, in the present days of minute differentiation, are important as enabling other workers, to whom the type-series is not available, to judge of the degree of distinctness of the proposed new form.

We are all strong on "standardization" nowadays, and it would be well if ornithologists would imitate the methods of some of their co-workers in mammals and minutely specify all the details to which we have alluded.

+ *Eupetes macrocerus griseiventris*.

Stuart Baker, Bull. B. O. C. xxxviii. 1917, p. 8.

This race, founded on three specimens from "Tang, Song Paa, Siam," *lege* Tung Song Paa, peninsular Siam, cannot possibly be maintained. "Paa" is merely Siamese for jungle, and the place in question is a railway junction in the state of Nakon Sritamarat, about Lat. 8° N.



We have four specimens from Kao Nong, a mountain on the borders of the provinces of Bandon and Nakon Sritamarat, about 40 miles N.N.E. of Tung Song, collected between 1200'–1500', between 18 and 24 June, 1913.

Of these one is a nestling having the under surface uniform dull slatish; two are very immature with earthy-brown heads and the chestnut ochraceous feathers of the breast only just appearing, and the fourth is an adult female.

This is absolutely identical with two of the same sex from Cheras, near Kuala Lumpur, Selangor, collected in October 1908, and from Kuala Teku, Tahan River, Pahang, August 1905; so Mr. Stuart Baker's type must have been slightly immature.

All these specimens and many others from Selangor are identical with a male from Sandarong Agong, Korinchi, western Sumatra, 2450 feet, collected on 2 July, 1914, and this can be regarded as a topotype of the species which was described from Padang. Wings of eight adults from the Malay Peninsula range from 93 to 98 mm., males being apparently slightly larger. The Sumatra male measures 99 mm.

+ *Corythocichla brevicaudata herberti*.

Stuart Baker, Bull. B. O. C. xxxviii. 1917, p. 10.

*Corythocichla leucosticta* Sharpe; Robinson, Journ. Fed. Malay States, 1914, p. 104.

This subspecies, also from the same locality as the preceding, has no existence in fact.

The actual type passed through our hands, and we have before us six birds, collected within a radius of 40 miles of Tung Song, which we have compared with thirty-six others from various parts of the Federated Malay States, including four exact topotypes.

While it is true that extreme specimens from each of these series present considerable differences *inter se*, any one from either series can be matched by one from the other.



Some specimens have the entire flanks dingy greyish, while others are strongly ochraceous fulvous. All have the wing in the neighbourhood of 60 mm., and there is much variation in the white tips to the secondaries and their coverts.

It is unfortunate that Mr. Stuart Baker has apparently compared his form with races from the north with which he is more familiar rather than with *C. b. leucosticta* Sharpe, which is the nearest geographical race. Had he done so on sufficient series, we are convinced that he would have refrained from describing it.

Personally, we consider that, excluding *Corythocichla crassa* (*Lanioturdinus*) from Borneo, which is fairly distinct, all the described races of this genus are no more than geographical forms of the oldest named form, viz., *C. brevicaudata* (Blyth). *Corythocichla* can, in our opinion, be conveniently retained as a distinct genus and not united with *Turdinulus*, as has been done by Hartert and Harington.

#### † *Stachyridopsis rufifrons obscura*.

Stuart Baker, Bull. B. O. C. xxxviii. 1917, p. 10.

This race is of even more doubtful value than the preceding. We have examined the types (*vide* Herbert, Journ. Nat. Hist. Soc. Siam, ii. 1916, p. 58) and compared them with specimens of the true *S. r. poliogaster*, with which they agreed, being exactly matched by a male collected at Ginting Bidei, Selangor, 2300', on 10 May, 1909 (F. M. S. Mus., No. 1304/09). The form is wide spread, though everywhere extremely rare, and no separation should be attempted except on very much larger series than are at present available, in view of the known liability to change of tint in all Timeliine birds from age of skin after death.

The original type of *S. r. poliogaster* was from Gunong Pulai, Johore. We possess specimens from Selangor and Perak in the Malay Peninsula, and from Korinchi in western Sumatra; while it has also been recorded from central Borneo.



+ *Stachyris leucotis goodsoni*.

Hartert, Bull. B. O. C. xxxvi. 1915, p. 7.

A female from Paku, Saribas, Sarawak, dated November, and a male, dated March, differ from a large series from the Malay Peninsula in the points stated by Hartert, viz., a darker slaty crown and in the darker tips to the wing-coverts, the first character having been already noted by Dr. Sharpe (Cat. Birds Brit. Mus. vii. 1883, p. 537). In addition, our specimens have the lores more tinged with buffy than any of the Malay Peninsula series.

+ *Stachyris poliocephala diluta*, subsp. nov. +

Differs from the typical *S. p. poliocephala* from Sumatra (two specimens from Deli tua, north-eastern Sumatra, compared) in being lighter below, the ferruginous of the breast and belly less saturate; the chin and throat less blackish grey; the cheeks and ear-coverts slightly paler grey.

Wing 65 mm., against 68 in the Sumatran birds; mean of ten Malayan birds 66.2, of four Bornean birds 67.0 mm.

*Type*.—Adult female, collected at Taiping, Perak, Federated Malay States, on 4 November, 1914.

*Specimens examined*.—Twenty-four from the Malay Peninsula, from Perlis to Selangor and Pahang; and four from Sarawak, Borneo, which for the present we associate with this form.

*Remarks*.—In addition to the diagnostic characters above stated, the Borneo-Malayan form shows a tendency to be somewhat paler in the mantle and back, but this feature is not constant.

+ *Stachyris maculatus pectoralis*.

*Timalia pectoralis* Blyth, Journ. Asiat. Soc. Bengal, xi. 1842, p. 793: Malacca.

Comparison of eleven specimens from Sarawak with fifteen from the Malay Peninsula (Upper Perak to Malacca) shows that the latter differ in being generally darker beneath, the flanks strongly washed with fulvous grey, the white edges to the feathers of the belly less pure.



The type-locality of *Timalia maculatus*, Temm. Pl. Col. 593, fig. 1, 1836, is quoted as Borneo and Sumatra, and we here restrict it to Borneo.

† *Erythrocichla bicolor whiteheadi*.

Hartert, Bull. B. O. C. xxxvi. 1915, p. 36.

Two females from Anyut Paku, Saribas, south-western Sumatra, and a series of twenty from all parts of the Malay Peninsula, from Trang to Pahang, confirms Dr. Hartert's diagnosis as to the duller forehead of the Bornean bird. One specimen, however, a male from Gurun, near Kedah Peak, central Malay Peninsula, approaches the Bornean birds very closely indeed in this respect.

† *Macronus ptilosus reclusus*.

Hartert, Bull. B. O. C. xxxvi. 1915, p. 36.

Six specimens from various parts of Sarawak maintain the distinctness of this race in having no slaty-grey patch in the middle of the abdomen, and in having the crown of the head of a brighter rufous than in the Malayan and Sumatran bird. In addition, the Bornean birds have a marked light fulvescent patch on the fore-neck, which is only present to a very minor extent in our Malayan series of over twenty specimens.

† *Xanthiscus flavescens vivida*.

Stuart Baker, Bull. B. O. C. xxxviii. 1917, p. 16.

We have never met with this form in any part of the Malay Peninsula (where it is stated to be found by its describer) south of the Isthmus of Kra, nor are we aware of any record of its occurrence within this area.

† *Iole virescens cinnamomeoventris*.

Stuart Baker, Bull. B. O. C. xxxviii. 1917, p. 16.

Four specimens, two males and two females, from Chong, Trang, peninsular Siam, collected in December 1909 by ourselves, agree well with the diagnosis of this race, and have the wings—82, 83, 81, 79 mm.



Stuart Baker records the range of this form as extending to the extreme south of the Malay Peninsula, but in this he is not correct; birds from the south of the latitude of Trang are all to be referred to the typical *Iole olivacea* Blyth, Journ. Asiatic Soc. Bengal, xiii. 1842, p. 386, which differs in being much browner, less greenish olive, with the throat greyish white, and the belly tinged with sulphur-yellow; axillaries with no tinge of buff; under tail-coverts dull brown with paler edges; bill larger and wing 86–90 mm. in birds from the Malay Peninsula, 85 mm. in a female from eastern Sumatra.

All these forms stand in subspecific relationship to each other, the meeting-place of *Iole olivacea olivacea* and *Iole olivacea virescens* being about in the State of Trang, whence we have also a female of the former race, wing 87 mm.

A female from Meetan, Mt. Mooleyit, north Tenasserim, measures 81.5 in wing, and appears to agree with the north Siamese bird described as *Criniger lonnbergi* Gyldenstolpe, Kongl. Sv. Vet.-Akad. Handl. l. No. 8, p. 24, pl. i. fig. 1.

The forms therefore are:—

1. *I. olivacea olivacea* Blyth: Sumatra, Borneo, Java, British portion of Malay Peninsula.
2. *I. olivacea cinnamomeoventris*: Peninsular Siam to Tenasserim.
3. *I. olivacea lonnbergi*: Central Tenasserim and north Siam.
4. *I. olivacea virescens*: Aracan, central and southern Burma.

† *Pomatorhinus olivaceus siamensis*.

Stuart Baker, Bull. B. O. C. xxxviii. 1917, p. 9.

This race from Maprit, south-western Siam, should certainly have been compared with that described as *Pomatorhinus schisticeps fastidiosus*, Hartert, Bull. B. O. C. xxxvi. 1916, p. 81, from Trang and Bandon, peninsular Siam, less than 200 miles distant.

We have seven specimens from Kao Nong, Bandon, and three from various places in Trang, peninsular Siam, which we have compared with two specimens from Me Wang,



northern Siam, and Doi Nga Chang, Lampang, northern Siam, 4500', which we owe to the kindness of Mr. Williamson, and which we regard as representative of *P. o. ripponi* Harington (Bull. B. O. C. xxvii. 1910, p. 9) of the Shan States.

These differ from *P. o. fastidiosus* in being generally lighter above without a markedly greyish-black cap, the patches in the sides of the neck more ochraceous orange, less chestnut, and more diffused into the nape. Tail decidedly less dark, especially at the base.

These are the characters which are stated to characterize *P. o. siamensis*, which must therefore be suppressed.

+ *Cyanoderma erythropterum sordida*.

Stuart Baker, Bull. B. O. C. xxxviii. 1917, p. 10.

We possess a large series of this subspecies from all parts of the peninsula from Bandon in peninsular Siam to Gunong Angsi in Negri Sembilan.

Those from Bandon and Trang, within 150 miles of Maprit, the type-locality of *C. e. sordida*, are certainly quite inseparable from the most southern specimens. It is undoubtedly the case that the black of the throat, and indeed the whole plumage, fades with considerable rapidity in the skin, as is the case with a very large number of Timeline birds. Mr. Stuart Baker has evidently been misled by freshly collected skins, and his subspecies cannot be maintained. Freshly collected birds from Pulau Tioman present the same differences.

+ *Tchitrea paradisi borneensis*.

Hartert, Bull. B. O. C. xxxvi. 1916, p. 75.

We have in our collection four adult males of this race with the tail fully developed. The tails of all greatly exceed those of any specimen of *T. p. affinis* in our collection, but do not attain the length of 459 mm. given for the type, the largest being 375 mm. The bills are certainly markedly larger than those of the vast majority of *T. p. affinis*, though one specimen from Trang, peninsular Siam, is as large as any of the Bornean birds in this respect.



The colour of the shaft-stripe of the central tail-feathers is not constant; two of the Bornean birds agree with those from the Malay Peninsula in having the terminal part white tipped with black at the extreme tip, while a few Malayan specimens have the shaft-stripe black throughout.

We are unable to appreciate any alleged differences in the colour of the feathers of the head.

While dealing with these species we have worked through the very large series of the genus in our collection, and find that three forms are represented, viz.: (1) *Tchitrea princeps* (Temm.), a rare winter visitor, of which we possess an adult male from the vicinity of Taiping, dated 31 October, and a female from Ginting Bidei, near Kuala Lumpur, shot in April. (2) *Tchitrea paradisi affinis* (Blyth), apparently resident throughout the year; and (3) *Tchitrea paradisi incii* Gould, only found from October to April.

The last two forms are amongst the most difficult of birds satisfactorily to discriminate, but adults in white plumage appear to differ by the much stronger median black shaft-stripes in back, mantle, and tail in *T. p. incii*. Young birds and females of *T. incii* appear to acquire very early a black throat, sharply defined from the breast, which is not present in our fifty specimens of *T. p. affinis*.

#### + *Gerygone griseus*.

Gyldenstolpe, Ornith. Monatsb. 1916, p. 27; id. Kongl. Sv. Vet.-Akad. Handl. lvi. No. 2, 1916, p. 78, pl. ii. fig. 2.

Count Gyldenstolpe has established this species on a single specimen from Koh Lak in peninsular Siam, and states that it differs from *G. modiglianii* Salvad., from Sumatra and the Malay Peninsula, in lacking the dusky horseshoe mark on the sides of the fore neck.

We have before us seven specimens from various parts of the Malay Peninsula and one from western Sumatra.

One of the former is from Pulau Panjang Anak, a small island near Junk Zeylon on the west side of the Peninsula, not far distant from Koh Lak.



This has the lateral horseshoe mark quite perceptible. The character is one that is easily obscured in the make-up of the skin, and I do not think it is possible to admit the existence of two forms of this bird in the Malay Peninsula. The Pulau Panjang bird has darker lores than those from Taiping and Bagan Datch in Perak, but is otherwise identical. Gyldenstolpe's figure is not satisfactory, the yellow of the under surface being too pale, while the black subterminal band to the tail is unduly emphasized.

† *Anthreptes hypogrammica intensior*.

Hartert, Bull. B. O. C. xxxviii. 1917, p. 27.

We have compared a pair from Saribas, Sarawak, with over forty specimens from all parts of the Malay Peninsula, and can just perceive the differences stated by Dr. Hartert, viz., a darker upper surface and yellow richer edges to the feathers of the throat, breast, and belly, especially the latter, in the Bornean birds. The differences are, however, very slight, and we doubt if it would be possible to discriminate with certainty unlabelled birds from the two localities.

The bird seems rare in Sumatra; we did not obtain it there in 1914, nor is it represented in large collections since received from Padang and Banca on the west coast, and from Deli district in north-eastern Sumatra. It was not obtained by Kloss in Padang, or by Buxton and Forbes in the Lampongs and Banca, though there is, I think, little doubt that it actually occurs in the island.

† *Melanoperdix nigra borneensis*.

Rothschild, Bull. B. O. C. xxxviii. 1917, p. 3.

We cannot detect the very slightest difference between a male from Betong Seribas, Sarawak, collected in August 1916, and four males from the low country of Selangor and Negri Sembilan. Our Bornean bird presents not the slightest greenish tinge as stated in Lord Rothschild's description of the type. We have no female Bornean birds for comparison and have not seen Sumatran birds.





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