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IN BRIEF

THE TYPE-LOCALITY OF *NECTARINIA SENEGALENSIS GUTTURALIS* (LINNAEUS), 1766

The wide-ranging Scarlet-chested Sunbird *Nectarinia senegalensis* (Linnaeus) is a savanna woodland species, which extends from far West Africa east to Ethiopia, ranging southeast of the Lower Guinea rainforest to northern and central Namibia in the west and to Natal and Zululand in the east. Rand, in Peters' *Check-list* (1967), recognized six subspecies, but the precise total is actually greater, as he synonymized at least two valid races, *N. s. inaestimata* (Hartert), 1899, from coastal Tanzania, and *N. s. saturatior* (Reichenow), 1891, from Angola, with the southeastern terminal race *N. s. gutturalis* (Linnaeus), 1766, the type-locality of which will be considered below.

Certhia gutturalis Linnaeus, 1766, is based on a reference of Brisson, 1760, the original material believed to emanate from "Brasilia" (=Brazil), then a major Portuguese colony. As demonstrated by Vincent (1935), Brazil continued to be seen as the provenance of the material upon which *gutturalis* was founded for the remainder of the Eighteenth Century, until corrected by Shaw, *Gen. Zool.*, vol. viii, 1812, p. 255, to southern Africa. Levaillant, *Hist. Nat. Ois. d'Afr.*, vol. vi, 1808, p. 165, who through the course of his southern African travels between 1781 and 1784 at no time operated within the established range of *N. senegalensis*, referred to the species as "La Caffrerie", apparently on Dutch settler hearsay and through his close association with C. J. Temminck and the Leiden Museum. The Levaillant reference seemingly influenced Vincent (1935, *Bull. Brit. Orn. Cl.* 55: 97) to select the southeastern Cape Province as a restricted type-locality for *gutturalis*. This was not a good choice, however, as the eastern Cape was only opened up to the collecting of natural history specimens from about the time of A. Sparrman, who reached as far east as the Great Fish River during his southern African travels of c. 1772–1776. Later, Dr W. J. Burchell, who followed Levaillant in studying the southern African arid zone biota, collected extensively in the Cape between 1811 and 1815, to be followed in turn by Dr Andrew Smith between 1821 and 1837. None of these students turned up the Scarlet-chested Sunbird in the Cape Province. Reichenow (1905, *Vögel Afrikas*, vol. 3) lists no Cape records, and indicated that the

southeastern range limits of *gutturalis* are in Natal, with listed occurrences from Durban, Pinetown, Pietermaritzburg, Eshowe, Ulundi and Lake St Lucia, where it still occurs. The currently accepted type-locality of *N. s. gutturalis* therefore lies some six to seven hundred miles (966–1127 km) to the southwest of the apex of the actual range, and requires to be adjusted to conform with it and such historical evidence as is available.

The Brazilian source of the basic Brissonian reference (*Ornith.*, vol. iii, 1760, p. 658, pl. 33, fig. 3), adopted by Linnaeus in the formulation of his *Certhia gutturalis*, indicates a possible Portuguese origin. Study of the relevant map in Hall & Moreau (1970, *Atlas of Speciation in African Passerine Birds*) shows that *Nectarinia senegalensis* in the southern aspects of its range is centred in the west along the Angolan coast and in the east from the region of Maputo in southern Mozambique south as far as Durban, Natal. Both regions were focal points as victualling stations (Luanda in the west and Delagoa Bay in the east) for shipping plying the Portuguese slave and spice trade routes during the Eighteenth Century. By mid-century there was also a lucrative market in western Europe for natural history specimens, including colourful tropical birds.

Either Angola or southern Mozambique requires to be seen as a possible type-locality for *N. s. gutturalis*, and in order to avoid disturbing the current subspecific taxonomy of the species, the choice of a Mozambique locality seems desirable. I therefore propose that the type-locality be adjusted on the basis of the above argument to the Maputo district, southern Mozambique, where the Scarlet-chested Sunbird is a relatively common species.

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BOOKS RECEIVED

Jenni, L. & Winkler, R. 1994. *Moult and Ageing of European Passerines*. Pp. x+225, 652 figures. Academic Press. ISBN 0-12-384150-X. £40.00. 32 × 24 cm.

This is a most unusual book. Written by two Swiss ornithologists with extensive experience of systematic examination of birds caught at ringing stations, it is far the most complete account of the moult of most of the breeding species of passerines of central and northern Europe. The text is in two parts. Part 1 deals with moult strategies and the sequence of moult, and is particularly outstanding in its detailed treatment of partial and postjuvenile moults (which have tended to be treated rather sketchily in earlier accounts). Part 2 consists of species accounts, covering 58 species from nearly all the European passerine families. The detailed text, in both parts, is supported by a large number of clear schematic figures (of wing, tail, seasonal progress of moult etc.) and also—and this is the most obviously attractive feature of the book—by nearly 500 beautifully reproduced colour photographs of spread wings, several for each species, illustrating differences related to age, sex, and degree of wear of the feathers. These photographs, taken by a special method developed by Thomas Degen, constitute a unique documentation and will be invaluable for all European ringers and other ornithologists with an interest in



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