

known west of Pakistan, and it is of further interest that it showed gonadal and plumage evidence of recent breeding activity. However, the specimen is not exceptional in having worn plumage so early in the year. PRC examined all the males of both subspecies in BMNH which had been collected between January and May, and though most were in fresh plumage, there were significant exceptions:—

*rossorum*—3 ♂♂ from Afghanistan 30 March, 13 April, 18 April—all with worn wings and tail; 1 juv from Afghanistan (Khandahar) 29 March—plumage spotted brown and white and therefore indicative of breeding in February.

*bicolor*—3 ♂♂ 5 March, 26 April, 8 May—all with worn wings and tail.

We conclude from this that breeding in *rossorum* and *bicolor* starts, at least occasionally, much earlier than the available literature suggests; and that the Oman bird, having bred in the west of its range very early in 1983, then wandered, or was carried by the NE monsoon winds or a storm, further west.

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## Notes on Philippine birds, 1

### The status of *Porzana paykullii* in the Philippines

by E. C. Dickinson

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The sole Philippine record of the Band-bellied Crane *Porzana* (= *Rallina*) *paykullii* is that of the Steere Expedition which reported taking one in November 1887 in Basilan (Steere 1890). Whilst looking unsuccessfully in the British Museum (Natural History) (BMNH) collection for a specimen of *Rallina fasciata* that Everett took in Balabac in 1893, a specimen (BM 1896.6.6. 1269) of *Rallina fasciata* was found from Basilan, collected by the Steere Expedition on 19 November (1887).

When later, reviewing the literature, it was noted that Steere claimed no record of *Rallina fasciata* from Basilan, it seemed probable that due to the similarity of these 2 species a misidentification had occurred. Mr. Derek Read at the BMNH kindly re-examined the facts and writes: "I have examined our entire series of these two species and have arrived at the same conclusion i.e. we appear only to have one relevant specimen (the one you found). It is clearly *R. fasciata*; although underparts are very similar in both



species, the colour of the back, and the wing markings, as well as size, easily separates the Basilan skin as *R. fasciata*." The Museum register shows that BM 1896.6.6. 1269) was originally entered as *Rallina fasciata*.

On the basis of this, *Porzana paykullii* must be deleted from the Philippine list. It may well be added again one day as the species has recently been taken in Hong Kong (Hong Kong Bird Report 1977; specimen now in BMNH).

*Acknowledgements.* Grateful thanks are extended to the authorities at the British Museum (Nat. Hist.), and to Derek Read in particular for verification; also to Robert S. Kennedy for discussion.

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## Notes on Philippine birds, 2

### A second Philippine record of *Sterna bernsteini*

by E. C. Dickinson & S. Eck

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Mees (1975) demonstrated that the Chinese Crested Tern should be known as *Sterna bernsteini* Schlegel rather than *Sterna zimmermanni* Reichenow. In a review of its distribution he pointed out that the sole record from the Philippines was a skin at Harvard in the Museum of Comparative Zoology collected by Governor Cameron Forbes, but unfortunately without locality or collecting date.

There is an unreported skin (C. 20608) in the Staatliches Museum für Tierkunde, Dresden. Collected in Manila Bay on 6 May 1905 it reached Dresden by exchange in 1910, from the Philippine Museum, Manila. Richard C. McGregor, author of 'A Manual of Philippine Birds' (1909-10) and ornithologist at the museum, was a friend and sometime field companion of Governor Forbes and this specimen was no doubt taken by him or his staff—quite possibly together with the specimen now at Harvard. Although no doubt has ever been cast on the Philippine provenance of Forbes's specimen it is good to have the confirmation that this additional record provides.

The original label, of C. 20608, is marked "bill chrome yellow at base, terminal half black" and the following measurements have been taken: wing 305 mm, bill from feathers on forehead 60 mm, terminal black part 24 mm.

*Acknowledgements.* The authors would like to thank Murray Bruce for stimulating the exchange of letters about this specimen that led to this note.

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