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THE CRESTED GUINEA FOWL

OF THE

SOUTHERN CONGO BASIN

By

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Under the name *Guttera cristata*, Professor DUBOIS (1) recorded a Guinea Fowl from Lake Leopold II in the upper Congo basin; but when the name *cristata*, or *pallasi* as it was redesignated by STONE (2), came to be restricted to the Upper Guinea race, no attempt was made to determine the subspecific status of the crested Guinea Fowl from the southern Congo. One reason was the scarcity of specimens: at Tervueren and Brussels, in 1921, I failed to find even the individual referred to by Professor DUBOIS. Dr. SCHOUTEDEN, Conservateur at the Congo Museum, was then in Africa and had already sent home a large collection of birds, among which I was permitted to examine nine specimens of the species which we now call, binomially, *Guttera edouardi*. They came from the region of

(1) *Annales Mus. Congo*, Zool., Série IV, I, fasc. 1, 1905, p. 27.

(2) *Auk*, 1912, p. 208 (*G. edouardi* thus came to replace *cristata* as the name of this wide-ranging species).

Lake Tumba, Bolobo, and Kwamouth, in the Belgian Congo, and are not nearly allied to the typical subspecies of southeast Africa, but resemble more closely — in the development of the crest and the colors of the bare parts of the head — *G. e. seth-smithi* of Uganda and the northern Congo. The spotting of the body plumage is however less blue, whiter indeed than in *G. e. pallasi*, a slight point of resem-



Fig. 1. — Head of *Guttera e. schoutedeni*. adult female from Kwamouth, Belgian Congo. One-half natural size.

blance to typical *edouardi*, although the secondary brown spotting of the latter is absent, or only very faintly indicated at the base of the hind neck in one individual.

From *G. e. sclateri* of the Cameroon, with rather similar body coloration, there is a constant difference in the shape of the crest; but it may be noted that the range of *sclateri* lies between that of *pallasi* and the form under discussion. In short, I find ample justi-

fication for regarding the bird of the Lower Kasai and adjacent districts as a distinct geographic race, thus far unnamed.

Dr. SCHOUTEDEN has generously loaned me three specimens from his collection for comparison with the material in the American Museum, and has requested me to describe the new form. I am happy to name it in his honor.

GUTTERA EDOUARDI SCHOUTEDENI, new subspecies.

Type. — ♀ adult, Kwamouth, Belgian Congo, collected by Dr. H. SCHOUTEDEN, N^o 768.

Description of Type. — Most closely resembling *G. e. pallasi*, but the spots on the body smaller and more sharply outlined, whiter. Especially is this noticeable on rump and upper tail-coverts. The black collar at base of neck somewhat more extensive than in *pallasi*. From *G. e. seth-smithi* it

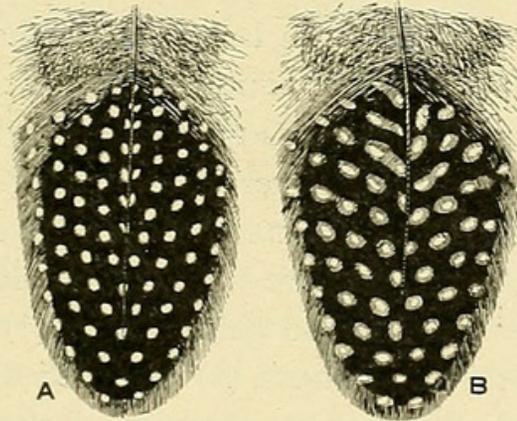


Fig. 2. — Feathers from lower rump of two races of *Guttera edouardi* inhabiting the Belgian Congo. A. *G. e. schoutedeni*, ♂; B. *G. e. seth-smithi*, ♂. In the latter the blue borders about the white spots are wider, with the result that the spotting seems bluer and more diffuse. Three-quarters natural size.

is distinguished by the whiter spotting of the body and narrower black collar, especially on the hind neck. There is no red skin about the eye, as in *G. e. granti* of East Africa. Only the throat and fore neck are red, the skin of malar region and all the rest of head and hind neck being dark blue.

The crest feathers are less curly than in *edouardi*, more as in *pallasi* and *seth-smithi*. the longest ones measuring 40 mm. Those of the forehead reach 27 mm. Gape-wattles small, scarcely noticeable.

Measurements of the Type (♀). — Wing (straightened), 260 mm.; tail, 124; culmen (from cere), 25; metatarsus, 85. The two other specimens before me have dimensions closely similar: wing, ♂ 261, ♂ 256; tail, ♂ 124, ♂ 128; culmen, ♂ 26, ♂ 24.5; metatarsus, ♂ 83, ♂ 80.

Specimens Examined. — *Guttera e. schoutedeni*: 9 specimens of both sexes from Lake Tumba, Bolobo, and Kwamouth, Belgian Congo.

G. e. pallasi: Sierra Leone, 1 adult; Misahöhe, 1 ♀.

G. e. sclateri: 6 adults from Sakbayeme, Edea, and adjacent localities in the Cameroon.

G. e. seth-smithi: Bangui, on Ubangi R., 1 ad., 1 ♀ imm.; «Bumba», 1 ad.; Rungu, in Uelle District, 2 ♂ ad.; 2 ♀ ad., Beni, near Semliki R., 2 ♂ ad., 1 ♀ ad., 1 juv.; Budongo Forest, Uganda, 1 ad.

G. e. granti: Tanganyika Territory, 1 ad.

G. e. edouardi: 5 adults, of both sexes, from Spitzkopf, Natal.

Range. — Probably includes a large part of the southern Belgian Congo, from the border of the equatorial forest through the gallery forests of the Kasai valley. Besides the localities where Dr. SCHOUTEDEN found it, near the Congo River, it has been recorded from Lake Leopold II, and Mr. EMILE TORDAY has told me of shooting crested Guinea Fowl, which he is positive were not *G. plumifera*, near Mushenge, between the Sankuru and Kasai Rivers (*).

It may be recalled that BOCAGE (1) recorded as *G. cristata* three live specimens brought to the menagerie of the Lisbon museum, from Benguella. Their exact origin was unknown, but the thought they came from the interior of that province. This is the only indication we have that *G. e. schoutedeni* may extend southward into Angola.

If *G. e. seth-smithi* is found in the northeastern part of the Congo basin, why should the race living in the Kasai district be different? The explanation must involve a short digression on the haunts of the

(*) I may mention here that I brought with me two specimens of *G. e. schoutedeni* from Kamaïmbi, near Luebo, a place in the Kasai not far away from Mushenge.
— H. SCHOUTEDEN.

(1) *Ornithologie d'Angola*, II, 1881, p. 399.

species. In eastern and southern Africa, it seeks the densest woods and thickets. In the rain forest of the Cameroon and Congo, however, the very distinct *Guttera plumifera* occupies the virgin forest, along with *Phasidus niger*. *Guttera e. seth-smithi* is limited to the border regions of the forest, frequenting the old grown-up clearings at its edges, or the dense gallery forests of the nearby savanna districts, as well as isolated forest patches in Uganda.

In the Congo Museum, to be sure, there is an old mounted specimen of *seth-smithi*, labeled Bumba; but my experience in the Uelle and Itury districts leads me to believe that more probably this specimen was secured in the Uelle.

Hence it is the equatorial forest, which separates the ranges of *seth-smithi* and *schoutedeni*. The district where they might be expected to meet is the Manyema, but we have no records of crested Guinea Fowl from that southeastern border of the Congo forest. *G. e. sclateri*, again, is found along the northern edge of the Cameroon forest; for at the River Ja BATES has collected only *plumifera*.

Taxonomic Remarks. — Professor REICHENOW (1) has admitted four species of *Guttera*: *crinata* (with 3 or 4 races), *pucherani*, *sclateri*, and *plumifera*. He considered *G. e. suahelica* NEUMANN synonymous with *granti*. *G. sclateri* is of course only a geographic race. Professor GHIGI, in his important monograph on the Numidinae (2), listed 8 forms binomially; but *barbata* and *lividicollis*, described by him, are not generally recognized. Although *barbata* may be a valid form, it probably never came from Madagascar, but is more likely the same subspecies as that from the neighborhood of Mikindani, which GROTE (3) later named as *makondorum*. They are both said to lack any trace of red on the bare skin of the head, but otherwise resemble *G. e. granti*. Still nearer to *granti* is *G. e. suahelica* NEUMANN (4), with the lower part of the fore neck and a small spot below the eye

(1) *Vögel Afrikas*, I, 1901, pp. 450-453; — *Wiss. Ergeb. Deutsch. Zentral-Afr. Exp.*, III, Lfg. 8, 1910, p. 257.

(2) *Memorie R. Accad. Sci. Bologna*, Cl. Sci. Fisc., Ser. VI, vol. VII, 1910, pp. 71-105.

(3) *Journ. f. Orn.*, LX, 1912, p. 514.

(4) *Bull. Brit. Orn. Cl.*, XXIII, 1908, p. 14.

red. Its type-locality is Lindi, and hence but 30 miles from that of *makondorum*. Because of its intermediate nature, I shall not recognize it here. Very probably *barbata* will be found extending southward in Mozambique, whence GHIGI's type may have come.

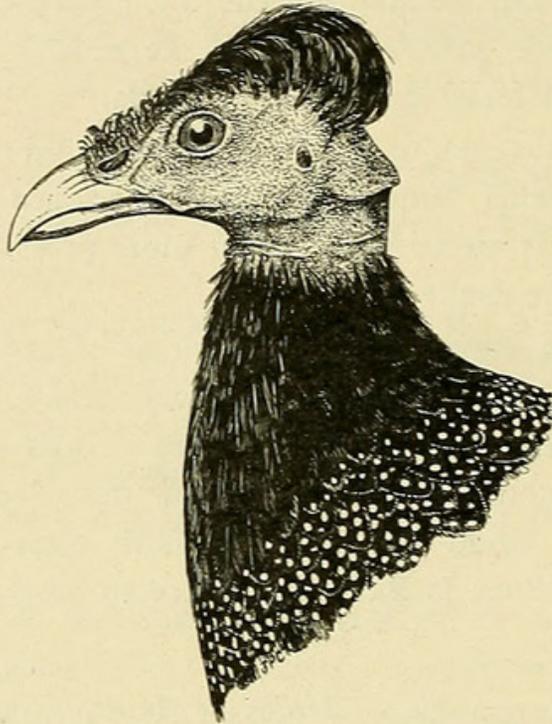


Fig. 3. — Head of *Guttera edouardi sclateri*, adult male from Sakbayeme, Cameroon, in Museum of Comparative Zoology, Cambridge, Mass. One-half natural size.

The amount of black feathering on the base of the neck seems to be an important character. More attention would probably have been given to it, had it been easier to measure in dried skins. In *pucherani* and *plumifera* it is entirely lacking; but *granti* approaches *pucherani*, I believe, in its reduced black collar as well as in its red orbital patch. Perhaps *pucherani* is hardly a distinct species from *edouardi*; at all events it is far less different than *plumifera*.

According to GHIGI, *G. e. edouardi* from Natal had the skin of the throat red, and his *lividicollis* of the Zambesi region was separated mainly because of its dark throat. I do not think the distinction is well established; and I am not inclined to recognize *Guttera e. symonsi* ROBERTS (1) from the mountains of Natal, which is said to have

(1) *Annals Transvaal Mus.*, VI, part 1, 1917, p. 3.

much less chestnut coloration in the feathers of the lower neck, back, and other parts of the body than the bird of the neighboring lowlands.

In conclusion I append a map illustrating the distribution of all the species and subspecies of the genus *Guttera* deemed worthy of

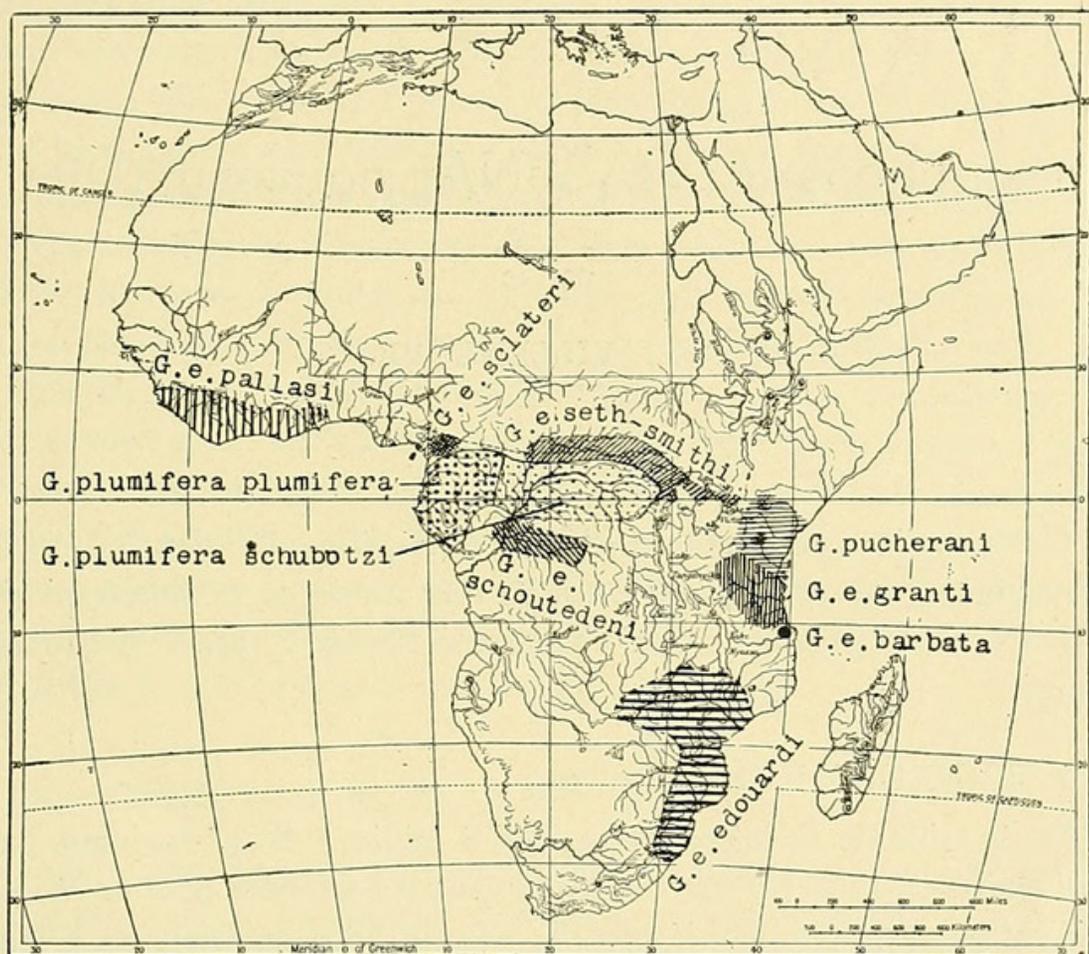


Fig. 4. — Distribution of the Crested Guinea Fowls of the genus *Guttera*. *G. plumifera*, with two races, is restricted to the rain-forest of Lower Guinea. *G. pucherani* inhabits forests in eastern equatorial Africa. *G. edouardi* has seven subspecies scattered along forest borders and gallery-forests from Sierra Leone to Natal.

recognition. Future collecting may close some of the gaps between the ranges; but in other cases changes in the character of the vegetation apparently keep certain races widely separated. The material now preserved in museums is by no means sufficient to indicate complete intergradation between the various races of *Guttera edouardi*.



Chapin, James P. 1923. "The Crested Guinea Fowl of the southern Congo basin." *Revue zoologique africaine* 11, 71-77.

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