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The five hundred and twenty-ninth meeting of the Club was held at the Zoological Society, on Tuesday, 16th March, 1954, following a dinner at 6.30 p.m. The meeting was held jointly with the B.O.U.

Chairman : SIR LANDSBOROUGH THOMSON.

Members present, B.O.U. 46 ; B.O.C. 52 ; Guests 29 ; Total 127.

**A New Race of Button-Quail (*Turnix maculosa*)
From New Guinea**

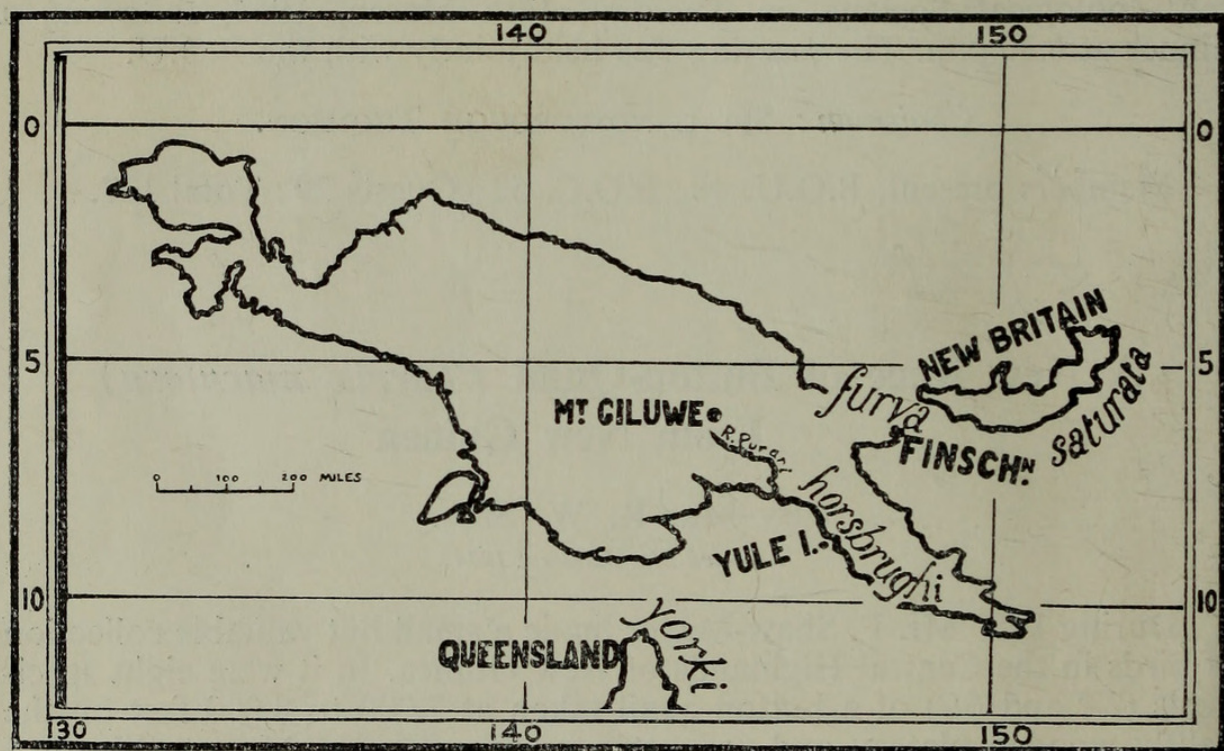
By MR. R. W. SIMS.

Received 31st January, 1954

During 1951 Mr. F. Shaw-Mayer made a small but valuable collection of birds in the Central Highlands of New Guinea. In it were eight specimens (2♂ and 6♀) of a button-quail taken at 7,000 to 8,000 feet on the lightly wooded plateau and mountain grasslands near Mount Giluwe. I find that they represent an undescribed race of *Turnix maculosa*.

Although comparatively little is known about the species in New Guinea, two races have been described on the very few specimens which have been collected, and both are from coastal localities at below 350 feet, they are *T. m. horsbrughii* Ingram from Yule Island and adjacent lowland grasslands of the mainland south of the mountain ranges of south-east New Guinea; and *T. m. furva* Parkes taken a short distance inland from Finschhafen on the Huon Peninsula (see map). The race *horsbrughii* appears to be more closely related to *T. m. yorki* Mathews of Queensland, Australia than with *furva*; one character which illustrates this affinity is the chestnut collar which is present yet incomplete in *yorki*, pronounced in

horsbrughii but absent in *furva*; in this, and other, respects *furva* is closer to *T. m. saturata* Ogilvie-Grant of New Britain. The two New Guinea races are separated by a series of mountain ranges and Parkes (1949) believed that these mountains were a major barrier which prevented interbreeding and brought about this division in the species. But the discovery of the bird on the mountain grasslands around Mount Giluwe indicates that high mountains are not necessarily a barrier to distribution. This point is emphasized by the fact that these birds lack the chestnut collar and are more closely related to *furva* than to *horsbrughii* and yet there is no mountain barrier between Mount Giluwe and the south-eastern coastal areas where *horsbrughii* is found: indeed, one of the tributaries of the Purari River, which flows into the Gulf of Papua, rises on the south slopes of Mount Giluwe. It may be that the tropical forest to the south with the absence of suitable habitat for the species is a more effective barrier than the mountain ranges, or the cause of such differences between races on the same land mass must be looked for, perhaps, in independent colonizations from widely separated sources of origin. However, it seems to me that as yet there are too few data on which to base any far reaching conclusions.



MAP OF NEW GUINEA SHOWING THE DISTRIBUTION OF THE RACES OF *Turnix maculosa*.

Although the present series was taken at between 7,000 to 8,000 feet the birds do not appear to exhibit the common altitudinal variation observed in other New Guinea species (Rand 1938), that is, birds from high altitudes are generally larger and darker in colour than those from the lowlands. The Mount Giluwe birds are as dark above as *furva* from the north-east coast and apparently smaller.

I wish to express my gratitude to Dr. Dean Amadon, of the American Museum of Natural History, for making a comparison between the

Mount Giluwe birds and the type of *T. m. furva* Parkes; his report confirmed that the birds from Mount Giluwe were a new race which I propose to name:—

Turnix maculosa giluwensis new race.

Description : (NOTE.—Since both *furva* and *horsbrughii* have been described from female specimens a female has been selected as the type of *giluwensis*).

Nearest to *T. m. furva* in being very dark above and lacking the chestnut collar which is present in *T. m. horsbrughii*. It is clearly separable from both these races in having paler underparts; the chin, throat, and belly are white*; and the colour of the breast and flanks is paler, more rufous, than in *furva* and *horsbrughii* in which it is more chestnut. The colour of the edging of the wing coverts, small feathers of the sides of the head, and the crown stripe is a pale ochraceous colour rather than rufous as in the other two races. It is almost identical, in size, with the type of *horsbrughii* which is somewhat smaller than *furva*.

Range : Known only from the grasslands and lightly wooded plateau near Mount Giluwe.

Type : Adult female: from grasslands on the north slopes of Mount Giluwe, Central Highlands, New Guinea, at 8,000 feet. Collected by F. Shaw-Mayer on 23rd May 1951; Collection No. 954; B.M.Reg. No. 1953. 17. 40.

Measurements : Wing (flat), 74; tarsus, 20; culmen, 13mm.

Colour of Soft Parts : Bill, yellowish, ridge and tip, dark horn; feet, yellow with greenish tinge; iris, cream.

Remarks : *Adult female*. The series of female exhibit some variation in the colour of the chin and throat. In some specimens these parts and, to a lesser extent, the belly are not entirely white but have a slight rufous wash. The feathers of the upper parts are mainly black with a faint grey edging on those of the crown and nape while some, or all, of those of the back have a narrow ochraceous edging. Many feathers of the back have their centres imperfectly barred. If present, chestnut barring predominates towards the rump and a greyish barring towards the interscapular region, this latter colour gives the feathers of that region an ashy appearance reminiscent of the condition in *T. m. saturata*.

Adult male. Similar to adult female, slightly smaller. One specimen (immature?) has a rufous washed chin and throat like some of the females.

Immature female. Similar to adult female but with the rufous colour at the sides of the breast separated by a broad whitish stripe joining the white of the throat and belly.

* Mayr, 1938, described a female specimen of *horsbrughii* from the Aroa River as having the middle of the belly whitish. The differences described above are in comparison with the type of *horsbrughii*.

MEASUREMENTS IN MILLIMETRES OF THE NEW GUINEA RACES OF *Turnix maculosa*.

	Wing (flat)	Tarsus	Culmen Ror.v.
<i>T. m. giluwensis</i> (type)	74	20	13
<i>T. m. giluwensis</i> (5 ♀)	70-74 (av. 71)	19-20 (av. 19.4)	11.5-14 (av. 12.6)
(1 imm. ♀)	75	18.5	13
(2 ♂)	65	18.5-19	10-11
<i>T. m. furva</i> * (type)	80	20	14
<i>T. m. horsbrughii</i> (type)	72	19.5	12

*Measurements taken from Parkes (1949).

Perhaps the greatest value of these Mount Giluwe specimens lies in the fact that they form a series collected in the same locality and most of them during the same month, namely in May 1951, only one was taken in June. This series exhibits, to a limited extent, the degree of individual variation found in the race, which is not very great. Moreover, since with the exception of the June bird all the others are in moult there are further superficial differences but again these are hardly discernible. It is to be regretted, however, that the sequence of moult cannot be determined despite the excellence of the series.

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The Type Species of the Genera *Tesia*, *Pnoepyga* and *Oligura*

By Dr. J. T. ZIMMER and Dr. C. VAURIE.

Received 21st February, 1954

During a study of the palearctic forms of the wren-babblers and bush-warblers now classified in the genera *Tesia*, *Pnoepyga*, and *Oligura*, all of which were proposed by Hodgson, the junior author met with great confusion owing to the repeated naming of these genera and the failure of proper designation of types. After a study of the problem by the senior author it was decided that the genera *Pnoepyga* and *Oligura* were still without valid type designations. Accordingly the following review was prepared to correct this deficiency.

The genus *Tesia* was proposed by Hodgson in 1837 (*Jour. Asiat. Soc. Bengal*, 6, p.101, Feb. 1837), with the inclusion of four newly described species—*cyaniventer*, *flaviventer*, *albiventer*, and *rufiventer*. No type was here designated, but Gray (*List. Gen. Bds.*, p.27, 1840) selected "*cyaniventris*" [= *cyaniventer*] for that position. This designation is valid.



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