

DURBAN MUSEUM

# Novitates



ISSUED BY THE DURBAN MUSEUM, DURBAN 4001, SOUTH AFRICA

VOL. XII, PART I

ISSUED 1st MARCH, 1979

## MISCELLANEOUS TAXONOMIC NOTES ON AFRICAN BIRDS

LIII

by

P. A. CLANCEY

(Director, Durban Museum, Durban)

### IS *CHARADRIUS VARIUS ALLENBYI* NICHOLL, 1921, INVALID?

Nicholl, *Bull. Brit. Orn. Club*, vol. xlii, 1921, p. 7, separated the Egyptian population of Kittlitz's Sandplover as new under the name *Charadrius varius allenbyi*, the *Type* from Lake Karoon=Birket Qârûn, El Faiyum, Egypt, on a single minor and entirely statistical size-difference. On the basis of a series of 5 ♂♂ and 6 ♀♀, *allenbyi*, with wings 102-112, was believed taxonomically distinguishable from nominate *C.v.varius* Vieillot, with wings in 33 ♂♂♀♀ 98-110 mm. As pointed out by Sclater, *Bull. Brit. Orn. Club*, vol. xlii, 1922, pp. 72, 73, *C.varius* Vieillot, 1818, is pre-occupied by *C.varius* Temminck, 1807, an alternative name for *C.pluvialis*, which = *Pluvialis apricaria* (Linnaeus), and the correct name for this sandplover is *C.pecuarius* Temminck, 1823: Cape of Good Hope, Cape. As can be appreciated from the mensural data provided by Nicholl in the original diagnosis, *allenbyi* is not taxonomically distinguishable on greater size from *C.p.pecuarius*. Nicholl's Egyptian race received recognition at the time of its description by Hartert, *Vög. pal. Fauna*, vol. iii, 1921/1922, pp. 2211, 2212, and later by Meinertzhagen, *Nicholl's Birds of Egypt*, vol. ii, 1930, pp. 538, 539, pl. xxvii, but was ultimately shown to be invalid on the characters given by Thesiger and Meynell, *Ibis*, ser. 13, vol. v, 4, 1935, pp. 784, 785. Meinertzhagen, *loc.cit.*, inadvertently misrepresented the case for *allenbyi*, stating that it was reputedly smaller, not larger, than

[Price R1,50 nett]

## AN OVERLOOKED RACE OF WATTLED PLOVER

Material recently received by the Durban Museum reveals the necessity of recognising two races of *Xiphidiopterus senegallus* (Linnaeus) (see Wolters, *Die Vogelarten der Erde*, lief. i, bog. 1 - 5, 1975, p. 23) from the South African Sub-Region. A name is required for one of these:

***Xiphidiopterus senegallus solitaneus*, subsp.nov.**

*Type*: ♂, adult. Okavango R. banks near Rundu, north-eastern South West Africa (Namibia). 27 October, 1978. Collected by M. O. E. Baddeley. In the collection of the Durban Museum, D.M. Reg. No. 31337.

*Diagnosis*: Differs from *X.s.lateralis* (Smith), 1839: Tugela R. Natal, in having the upper-parts darker and greener olive, less buffish, brown (Light Olive-Brown (Ridgway, pl. xxx), *versus* pale Saccardo's Umber (pl. xxix)), and with the streaking over the hind neck greyer. Black patch over mid-throat larger, and neck streaking both coarser and blacker, the pale interstices whiter; breast panel pale vinaceous-grey rather than light buffy (Vinaceous-Fawn (pl. xl), as against Vinaceous-Buff (same pl.)), and dark lower lateral patches slate-black or charcoal black rather than sooty brown.

*Measurements*: Wings of 7 ♂♂♀♀ 231,5 - 244 (238,2), SD 4,56 mm.

*Material examined*: 7 (South West Africa: Rundu; Caprivi Strip: Linyanti, Kabuta; Botswana: Satau (18° 05' S., 23° 22' E.); Zambia: Lochinvar, Kafue (Lusaka district)).

*Range*: Angola, northern South West Africa, Caprivi, northern Botswana, Zambia, southern and eastern Zaïre, ? and Uganda and western Kenya. Eastern range limits and post-breeding movements uncertain.

*Measurements of the Type*: Wing (flattened) 240, culmen (exposed) 34,5, tarsus 86, tail 105 mm.

*Remarks*: Chapin, *Birds Belgian Congo*, part ii, 1939, p. 84, draws attention to variation in flank patch colouration detected in samples of this plover from eastern Zaïre. It is uncertain at this stage if the variation noted by Chapin in eastern Zaïre material is in any way correlated with one of the main characters employed in the description of *X.s.solitaneus*.

The name chosen for the new taxon is from the Latin *solitaneus*: distinct or separate.

The range of *X.s.lateralis* is from the interior of Natal and Zululand, Swaziland, southern Moçambique, the Transvaal and Rhodesia,

north to Malawi and southern Tanzania, but the northern range limits are currently tentative.

I am grateful to Mr. Bryan Donnelly of the National Museum of Rhodesia, Bulawayo, for the loan of relevant material.

#### A NAME FOR AN UNDESCRIBED SUBSPECIES OF *STERNA BERGII* LICHTENSTEIN

In *Durban Mus.Novit.*, vol. x, 14, 1974, pp. 191 - 206, I demonstrated that the population of the Swift Tern present in the Moçambique Channel region off south-eastern Africa appeared to constitute an undescribed race. As Moçambique is now a Marxist state, it is highly unlikely that within the foreseeable future South African workers will be able to go further into this particularly interesting problem. Rather than leave the entity indefinitely without a name, I propose

#### *Sterna bergii* *enigma*, subsp.nov.

*Type:* ♀, adult. Coast 32 km N. of Beira, Manica e Sofala, southern Moçambique, at 19° 40' S., 35° 05' E. 7 September, 1962. Collected by Messrs. R. W. Rankine and R. Peek. In the collection of the National Museum of Rhodesia, Bulawayo.

*Description and range:* As given under "*Sterna bergii* ? subsp.nov." in *Durban Mus.Novit.*, vol. x, 14, 1974, pp. 202, 203.

#### ON THE GENERIC STATUS OF THE GREEN BARBET

The Green Barbet of eastern and south-eastern Africa was originally described by Shelley in the genus *Barbatula* Lesson, 1837, which is pre-occupied, in the combination *Barbatula olivacea* Shelley, 1880. Fifteen years later this same author described the far southern isolate of the species as *Stactolaema woodwardi* Shelley, 1895, the genus *Stactolaema* being of Marshall and Marshall, 1870, the type-species of which is *Buccanodon anchietae* Bocage, 1869. The type-species of *Buccanodon* Hartlaub, 1857, is *Barbatula duchailloi* Cassin, 1855, a highly decorative species of the equatorial forest belt of the continent. In its plain green and greyish olive plumage, the Green Barbet is highly dissimilar to most of the species with which it has been or is currently associated in *Stactolaema* by various authors.

In his recent World list, Wolters, *Die Vogelarten der Erde*, lief. 2, bog. 6 - 10, 1976, p. 151, places *olivacea* in a greatly enlarged genus *Gymnobucco* Bonaparte, 1850, the type of which is *Bucco calvus* Lafresnaye, 1841, in which *Stactolaema* is accorded only sub-generic