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**Bulletin of the British Ornithologists' Club.**

London :The Club,1893-

<http://www.biodiversitylibrary.org/bibliography/46639>

**v.81 (1961):** <http://www.biodiversitylibrary.org/item/126872>

Page(s): Page 52, Page 53, Page 54

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*Wing Measurements :*

♂♂ 153, 157, 157, 158, 160, 160, 160, 160, 161, 162, 162, 163, 164, 165, 166 mm. Average=160.37 mm.

♀♀ 160, 160, 160, 160, 160, 160, 162, 162, 162, 164, 164, 165, 166, 168 mm. Average=162.78 mm.

*Distribution:* Transylvania as far as the inner slopes of the Carpathians, both in the lowlands and in the hills. In the west as far as the western Transylvanian Alps: in the north as far as the Alps of Radna. The valley of the river Strigy (Streiul) would appear to be the zone between *A. n. daciae* and *A. n. indigena*.

Our thanks are due to Dr. James M. Harrison for reading our paper before publication.

## References:—

- <sup>1</sup>. Madarász, J., 1900. *Die Vögel Ungarns*. p. 546.
- <sup>2</sup>. Dombrowski, R., 1912. *Ornis Romaniae*. p. 406.

## African Serpent Eagle in Sierra Leone

by J. H. HARROP

*Received 29th November, 1960*

Matru, the headquarters both of the Jong Chiefdom and of the Bonthe District, is situated in the South Western Province of Sierra Leone, rather more than thirty miles up the Jong river from Bonthe. Most of the surrounding countryside is "farm bush", though there are some big trees left along the riverside.

On 31st March 1960, while I was stationed at Matru, Ronald Albrecht and Ronald Baker, both sons of local missionaries, brought me a bird which they had shot three or four miles north of there, not far from the rapids at Willai. I examined the bird and found it to be a Gold Coast Serpent Eagle, *Dryotriorchis spectabilis spectabilis* (Schlegel). When I saw that this bird was not listed from Sierra Leone in the first volume of Bannerman's *Birds of Tropical West Africa*, I decided to measure and photograph it. Inside the bird's bill I found the end of the tail of what proved to be a Night Adder (*Causus rhombeatus*—Lichtenstein). I was therefore able to take a colour photograph of the Serpent Eagle, with the snake which had been its last prey protruding from its bill.

During the summer, this transparency was sent to Dr. D. A. Bannerman, who fully confirms my identification of the bird as belonging to the Upper Guinea race.

## Geographical variation in the South African populations of the Magpie-Shrike *Lanius melanoleucus* Jardine

by P. A. CLANCEY

*Received 31st October 1960*

The Magpie-Shrike *Lanius melanoleucus* is a large-sized, pied, gregarious laniid of southern and eastern Africa, of which two geographical races are currently admitted by workers, these being nominate *L. melanoleucus* Jardine, 1831: Orange River, and *L. m. aequatorialis* (Reichenow), 1887: Gasa Mts., 12–14 miles south-west of Kondoa, Kondoa-Irangi district,



north-central Tanganyika Territory. At the present time only the nominate race is believed to occur within South African sub-continental limits, though years ago Neumann (1900) arranged the austral populations in two races, when he proposed the name *Urolestes melanoleucus damarensis* Neumann, 1900: Rehoboth, Damaraland, for the populations of South-West Africa and the Kalahari Desert, Bechuanaland Protectorate. Reichenow (1902-1903) rejected Neumann's *U. m. damarensis*, which he placed in the synonymy of *L. m. melanoleucus*, and all subsequent workers have followed Reichenow's example in recognising only the nominate race from Africa south of the Zambesi River. Study of a large panel of skins in the collections of South African museums (East London Museum, Durban Museum, Natal Museum, Transvaal Museum, and the National Museum of Southern Rhodesia) suggests that Neumann's findings are not without some factual basis, and confirms that two races of *L. melanoleucus* can be admitted from within South African limits, one of which will require to be given a name.

The populations of the Magpie-Shrike occurring in Africa south of the Zambesi River can be arranged in two races mainly on the basis of differences in wing-length, and the nomenclature, characters and ranges of these are as follows:

(a) *Lanius melanoleucus melanoleucus* Jardine

*Lanius melanoleucus* Jardine, *Edinburgh Journ. Nat. Geogr. Science*, vol. iii, 1831, p. 209: Orange River, Cape Province. *Synonyms*: *Urolestes melanoleucus damarensis* Neumann, *Journ. f. Ornith.*, 1900, 3, p. 262: Rehoboth, Damaraland, South-West Africa. ? *Urolestes melanoleucus angolensis* Meise, *Abhandl. Verhandl. Naturwiss. Ver. Hamburg*, N.F. Bd. II, 1957 (1958), p. 77: Chibia, Huila, southern Angola.

Head, neck and back glossy black, the feathers with a slightly oily texture; scapulars and rump white, the latter with an overlay of pale grey. Under-parts sooty black, the lanceolate feathers of the lower throat and breast with a greyish bloom in freshly moulted plumage. Wings black, the primaries with a prominent white speculum over their basal surfaces, and all primaries and secondaries (including the tertials) broadly tipped with white. The sexes are alike, but the female differs in having large patches of white plumes on the flanks. Wings of 20 ♂♂ 137-145 (140.3), 15 ♀♀ 137-145 (140.0), tails of 10 ♂♀ 298-351 (320.6) mm.

*Material examined*: 59.

*Range*: Central and northern South-West Africa, including the Caprivi Strip, the Bechuanaland Protectorate, Bechuanaland (northern Cape Province), western Orange Free State, western and north-western Transvaal, western and north-western Matabeleland, Southern Rhodesia, and extralimitally in southern and south-western Angola and Northern Rhodesia. Irregularly south of the Orange River, having been recorded from Colesberg and near Aliwal North. Intergrades to the east of its established range in the central and northern Transvaal and parts of Matabeleland with the next race.

*Remarks*: Meise (1957) has recently separated the population of southern Angola as a new race under the name *U. m. angolensis* Meise, 1957: Chibia, Huila, southern Angola. I have not been able to examine any material of this proposed new taxon, so can offer no worthwhile



opinion as to its discreteness, but Mrs. B. P. Hall, *in litt.*, kindly informs me that she does not believe that it is valid, a view which is apparently shared by Dr. Austin L. Rand in his treatment of this species in his revision of the shrikes for the continuation of Peters *Check-List*. In the event of these views being followed, *U. m. angolensis* will require to be treated as a synonym of the nominate race. However, Meise, in his original description of *U. m. angolensis*, shows that the name was given to a population of large-sized birds, similar in wing-length to those of South-West Africa, the Bechuanaland Protectorate and contiguous areas to the east and north-east, though shorter-tailed [247–280 (Meise, *loc. cit.*) as against 298–351 mm. (Clancey)] and with the plumage colouration much as in *L. m. aequatorialis*. It seems to me that the status of *U. m. angolensis* is still unresolved and warrants further study.

**(b) *Lanius melanoleucus expressus*, subsp. nov.**

*Type*: ♂, adult. Game Farm "Malamala", near Newington, eastern Transvaal lowveld, South Africa. 20th July, 1952. Collected by P. A. Clancey. In the collection of the Durban Museum.

*Diagnosis*: Similar to the nominate race as defined above, but of markedly smaller size, most noticeable in the shorter, rounder wing (♂♂ 127–137.5, ♀♀ 125–137, as against 137–145 and 137–145 mm.). Also with a pronounced tendency to have the white apical spots to the primaries and secondaries (including the tertials) smaller, and with the white of the rump more sullied with grey. Rectrices tending to be narrower.

Wings of 20 ♂♂ 127–137.5 (133.1), 15 ♀♀ 125–137 (132.2), tails of 10 ♂♀ 273–353 (305.2) mm.

*Material examined*: 58.

*Measurements of the Type*: Wing 132, culmen from base 25.5, tarsus 38, tail 328 mm.

*Range*: Natal and Zululand from about the basin of the Tugela River, northwards in the eastern lowlands through Swaziland, Sul do Save, southern Portuguese East Africa, and the eastern and north-eastern Transvaal to south-eastern and eastern Southern Rhodesia, the lower Zambesi River valley, and southern Nyasaland.

*Remarks*: The name of the new race is from the Latin *expressus*, clear, evident, prominent, etc.

*Literature cited*:—

Meise, W. *Abhandlungen und Verhandlungen des Naturwissenschaftlichen Vereins in Hamburg*, N.F. Bd. II, 1957 (1958), pp. 77–79.

Neumann, O. *Journ. f. Ornith.*, 1900, 3, p. 262.

Reichenow, A. *Die Vögel Afrikas*, vol. ii, 1902–1903, pp. 627–628.

**On the question of the occurrence of  
Peters' Twinspot *Hypargos niveoguttatus* (Peters) in  
Sul do Save, Southern Mozambique**

by W. J. LAWSON

Received 8th October, 1960

Pinto & Lamm (*Ostrich* 30, (2), 91, 1959.) in fixing the type-locality of *H. niveoguttatus* at Tete, Mozambique, state, "We are satisfied that in