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Part 12

MISCELLANEOUS TAXONOMIC NOTES ON AFRICAN BIRDS

XII

by

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I. GEOGRAPHICAL VARIATION IN THE NARINA TROGON

APALODERMA NARINA (STEPHENS) OF AFRICA

The colourful Narina Trogon *Apaloderma narina* (Stephens) of the forested parts of the Ethiopian Region is generally credited by workers with four nomenclaturally recognisable racial groups of populations, these being *A.n.narina* (Stephens), 1815: Knysna Forest, southern Cape Province, South Africa; *A.n.littorale* van Someren, 1931: Sokoke Forest, coastal Kenya Colony; *A.n.brachyurum* Chapin, 1923: Avakubi, Ituri district, eastern Belgian Congo; and *A.n.constantia* Sharpe and Ussher, 1872: Denkeria, Gold Coast (Ghana) (*vide* Peters, *Check-List of Birds of the World*, vol. v, 1945, pp. 159, 160; Chapin, *Birds of the Belgian Congo*, part ii, 1939, pp. 480, 481). In a short paper dealing mainly with the geographical variation of the South African populations in the *Durban Museum Novitates*, vol. iv, 3, 1952, pp. 39-44; I recognised an additional race from equatorial Africa, restricting the range of the nominate form to the southern extremities of the continent. For this additional race I resuscitated the name *Hapaloderma rufiventre* Dubois, *Proceedings of the Zoological Society of London*, 1896, p. 999, type-

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Remarks: It is interesting to note that the two main occidental racial representatives of the species in the arid west of the South African sub-continent (*P.v.inustus* and *P.v.caurinus*), both of which show less lipochrome than the eastern and northern forms, are isolated from one another by an intrusive belt of the richly coloured *P.v.velatus*, a predominantly eastern race, which has thrust its range far to the west along the Orange River to its very mouth on the South Atlantic coast.

I am grateful to Dr. W. Hoesch, of Okahandja, for the care taken in collecting and preparing the series of specimens upon which this new subspecies is based.

The name of the new form is from the Latin *caurinus*, of the north-west wind, *i.e.*, north-western.

4. ON SOUTH AFRICAN *PLOCEUS INTERMEDIUS* RÜPPELL

Currently all populations of the Lesser Masked Weaver *Ploceus intermedius* Rüppell occurring in the South African sub-continent are referred to a single race, namely, *P.i.cabanisii* (Peters), 1868: Inhambane, Sul do Save, southern Portuguese East Africa, and Reichenow's description of *P.lübberti* from Damaraland in 1902 seems to have been largely overlooked by later workers. The name is not mentioned by Sclater, *Systema Avium Aethiopicarum*, part ii, 1930, p. 740, who tentatively refers Damaraland birds to the eastern form.

Limited material in the Durban Museum suggests that two races of this weaver should be recognised from South Africa. Damaraland examples of *P.intermedius* differ from certain *P.i.cabanisii* in being paler and less streaked with blackish on the upper-parts, and the breeding male is significantly paler yellow on the under-surface, the fore-throat also rather less extensively washed with Raw Sienna. The differences segregating the populations of our arid west from those of *P.i.cabanisii* are comparable to those distinguishing *P.v.caurinus* from *P.v.velatus*, as detailed in the previous note of this series. I believe it desirable to recognise two races from within our limits, and the pale western form may be known as *P.i.lübberti* Reichenow, 1902: Damaraland (*vide Ornithologische Monatsberichte*, 1902, p. 77).

The range of *P.i.lübberti* is poorly known. Specimens available to me are from central Damaraland, but the form almost certainly occurs throughout much of northern Great Namaqualand, Damaraland, Ovamboland and the Kaokoveld, in South-West Africa, and presumably in south-western Angola. Chapin, *Birds of the Belgian Congo*, part iv, 1954, p. 339, records that birds from the Angola coast near Lobito Bay are very richly coloured and more washed with brown than any in eastern Africa (*P.i.intermedius* and *P.i.cabanisii*). These richly coloured populations of the Lobito area are certainly not *P.i.lübberti*, and may be an undescribed race.