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MISCELLANEOUS TAXONOMIC NOTES ON AFRICAN BIRDS

XV

by

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1. A NEW RACE OF SHELLEY'S FRANCOLIN *FRANCOLINUS SHELLEYI* OGILVIE-GRANT FROM NATAL AND ZULULAND.

The austral populations of Shelley's Francolin are characterized as a new subspecies to science under the following name:

Francolinus shelleyi sequestris, subsp. nov.

Type: ♂, adult. Albert Falls, near Pietermaritzburg, Natal. 25 August, 1951. Collected by Robin Guy. In the collection of the Natal Museum, Pietermaritzburg. Reg. No. 2308.

Diagnosis: Similar to *F.s.shelleyi* Ogilvie-Grant, 1890: Umfuli River, Southern Rhodesia, but rather darker, less greyish, and more boldly marked with Fuscous-Black (*vide* Ridgway, *Color Standards and Color Nomenclature*, 1912, pl. xlvi) on the upper-parts. More clearly differentiated on the ventral surface, being more densely mottled with Fuscous-Black over the lower breast and upper abdomen, and with the breast, body-sides and flanks rather darker (Hazel (pl. xiv) as against Tawny (pl. xv)). Similar in size.

Material examined: *F.s.sequestris*, 6. *F.s.shelleyi* from Southern Rhodesia, 11.

[Price 5/- nett.]

Range: Southern and eastern Tanganyika Territory (south from about Ugogo and the Pangani River), northern Portuguese East Africa, Nyasaland, and south-eastern Northern Rhodesia, southwards to southern Portuguese East Africa, eastern and south-eastern Mashonaland and southern Matabeleland, Southern Rhodesia, eastern Transvaal, eastern Swaziland and north-eastern Zululand (Makatini Flats). Extending up the Zambesi River valley to about the Kariba Lake. Intergrades with *P.r.retzii*, *P.r.nigricans* and *P.r.graculinus* wherever the ranges are in contact.

Remarks: Intergrading populations *P.r.retzii* \approx *P.r.tricolor* occur in Southern Rhodesia as far west as the Matopos (wings of 5 ♂♀ 125, 126, 127, 132, 135 mm.) and Fort Tuli (wings of 3 ♂♀ 127, 128, 130.5 mm). The single example of *P.r.tricolor* from Kavira Hot Springs, Wankie, is unusual, and may be due to some movement of populations out of the hot Zambesi River Valley in late summer. The specimen concerned was taken in February.

10. ON THE CHARACTERS AND RANGE OF *ZOSTEROPS PALLIDA DESERTICOLA* REICHENOW

Vincent, *loc.cit.*, 1952, p. 99, gives the range of *Z.p.deserticola* Reichenow, 1905: lower Orange River, as Great Namaqualand, while Sclater, *loc.cit.*, 1930, p. 677, virtually restricts it to the type-locality, at the same time recording the nominate race of *Z.pallida* Swainson, 1838: Rustenburg, western Transvaal, from as far west as Little Namaqualand! Roberts, *loc.cit.*, 1940, p. 330, states that *Z.p.deserticola* occurs in South-West Africa, while McLachlan and Liversidge, *loc.cit.*, 1957, p. 418, give no range data for the taxon. Moreau, in his largely abortive attempt to revise the western Zosteropidae, treats *Z.pallida* (with which is apparently united *Z.p.deserticola*) as a monotypic species (*vide Bull. Brit.Mus. (Nat.Hist.)*, Zoology, vol. 4, No. 7, 1957).

On the basis of the very adequate freshly collected material in the Durban Museum, I find *Z.p.deserticola* to be moderately well differentiated from *Z.p.pallida* of the moister east on the basis of the paler, more yellowish or olive, less green or greyish green, upper-parts (about Dull Citrine (*vide* Ridgway, *loc.cit.*, 1912, pl. xvi), as against Yellowish Olive (pl. xxx). On the ventral surfaces, the two races are also readily separable, *Z.p.deserticola* being slightly brighter yellow over the throat, while the sides of the breast and body and the flanks are distinctly warmer and more buffy (about or slightly paler than Cinnamon-Buff (pl. xxix), as against a colour slightly warmer than Dark Olive-Buff (pl. xl) or Dark Olive-Buff/Buffy Brown). The white of the median ventral surface in *Z.p.*

deserticola is also a more creamy, less silvery white, but there appears to be little in the nature of a valid mensural difference between the two taxa. Macdonald, *loc.cit.*, 1957, p. 153, also found the slight size variation occurring between western (*Z.p.deserticola*) and eastern (*Z.p.pallida*) populations of *Z.p.pallida*, *sens.strict.*, to be of no racial significance. However, on the colour characters enumerated above, *Z.p.deserticola* and *Z.p.pallida* should be recognised as subspecifically discrete, the differences being actually greater than those used to segregate the latter race from *Z.p.atmorii* Sharpe. *Z.p.deserticola* ranges from South-West Africa south to northern Little Namaqualand, Bushmanland and Kenhardt (Hartbees River), in the north-western Cape Province, and south-east to about Prieska and the Asbestos Mountains of the northern Cape. In the eastern parts of the northern Cape it intergrades with *Z.p.pallida*, the range of which is the valleys of the Vaal and upper Orange Rivers (not in Basutoland) and their major affluents (Harts, Modder, etc.).

In dealing with the geographical range of the taxon *Z.p.deserticola*, attention requires to be given to the form *Z.p.haigamchabensis* Bradfield, 1944 (reprinted in 1952 (*vide Ostrich*, vol. xxiii, 2, 1952, p. 128)): Haigamchab, Goanikontes, Swakop River, Damaraland, South-West Africa, which was described on the basis of being paler in general colouration than *Z.p.deserticola*. Macdonald found no difference between birds from the lower Orange River (topotypical of *Z.p.deserticola*) and others from the lower Kuiseb River, immediately south of the Swakop River, and virtual topotypes of *Z.p.haigamchabensis*. Until further evidence can be produced in support of Bradfield's race of white-eye, I believe it advisable to place *Z.p.haigamchabensis* in the synonymy of *Z.p.deserticola*.