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MISCELLANEOUS TAXONOMIC NOTES ON AFRICAN BIRDS XXXIII

by

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VARIATION IN KITTLITZ'S SANDPLOVER *CHARADRIUS PECUARIUS* TEMMINCK

In describing *Charadrius varius allenbyi*, subsp. nov., from L. Karun, El Fayum, Egypt, on a very equivocal size-difference, Nicholl, *Bull. Brit. Orn. Club*, vol. xlii, 1921, p. 7, appears to be the only worker to have proposed the breakdown of *Charadrius pecuarius* Temminck. Nicholl claimed that Egyptian specimens of *pecuarius* were larger than tropical African ones: wings of ♂♀ 102–112, versus 98–110 mm. The difference attributed to *allenbyi* is insufficient for recognition by present-day standards, and, moreover, many specimens from the South African topotypical population of *C. pecuarius* have wings in excess of 112 mm., the upper limit given by Nicholl for his *allenbyi*. Several authors have associated *C. sanctaehelenae* (Harting), 1873: St.¹ Helena, with *C. pecuarius*, though recently, following Chapin, *Birds of the Belgian Congo*, part ii, 1939, p. 65, Vaurie, *Birds of the Palearctic Fauna*, vol. ii (Non Passeriformes), 1965, p. 375, has kept it separate from *pecuarius*, which sandplover is currently treated as monotypic.

A study of a reasonably adequate panel of material from southern, central and south-eastern Africa recently carried out in the Durban

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situations on other major flood-plains in Moçambique. Breeding on recently ploughed land in early June.

Measurements of the Type: Wing 92, culmen from base 15, tarsus 26, tail 61 mm.

Remarks: At Chicumbane *C. c. alluvia* occurred alongside large numbers of breeding Richard's Pipits *Anthus novaeseelandiae spurium* Clancey, which, like *alluvia*, is a distinctive flood-plain race of the Moçambique coastal lowlands, and pairs of the lapwing *Vanellus senegallus lateralis* Smith and the small plovers *Charadrius pecuarius pecuarius* Temminck and *Charadrius tricollaris tricollaris* Vieillot. *C. c. alluvia* adds a new species to the Sul do Save list, and its discovery constitutes only the third record of this lark for all of southern Moçambique (see Clancey, *Handlist Birds Southern Moçambique*, part 2, in *Mem. Inst. Invest. cient. Moçamb.*, vol. x (in press)). The birds breeding locally on the Manica Platform, in western Manica e Sofala, are attributable to *C. c. saturator*.

Some of the races of *C. cinerea* are rather finely drawn. *C. c. anderssoni* and *C. c. niveni* are very close to one another in dorsal coloration, though *niveni* ranges distinctly longer in the wing. *Anderssoni* and *saturator* are, however, alike in size, but the latter is redder and more ochraceous above in series of adult males, though there is very little difference between the two taxa in the females. To complicate matters, the precise breeding ranges of the two along the northern and north-eastern periphery of the South West Arid District are by no means adequately understood at this stage, as post-breeding nomadism results in both forms having been collected alongside one another in this same general region.

The weights of the ten paratypes of *C. c. alluvia* are as follows:

♂♂ 24,3, 24,7, 24,7, 24,7, 27

♀♀ 24, 25,2, 26,2, 27,5, 28,9 gm.

The female with a weight of 28,9 gm. had an incubation-spot.

ON THE SOUTHERN RANGE LIMITS OF *NILAUS AFER NIGRITEMPORALIS* REICHENOW, 1892

Hall and Moreau, *Atlas Spec. Afr. Pass. Birds*, 1970, map 98, fix the austral range limits of *Nilauis afer nigritemporalis* Reichenow (not *nigrotemporalis*) as the valley of the Zambesi R. In this connection it requires to be pointed out that as long ago as 1936 Roberts, *Ann. Transv. Mus.*, vol. xviii, 3, 1936, p. 198, recorded

the obtaining of an example of *nigritemporalis* at Otobotini, north-eastern Zululand, far to the south of the Zambesi R. Mackworth-Praed and Grant, *Birds Eastern and North Eastern Africa*, vol. ii, 1955, p. 586, follow Roberts in extending the range of *N. a. nigritemporalis* south of the Zambesi to Zululand, as does Clancey, *Catalogue Birds South African Sub-Region*, 1965-1966, p. 535. Lawson, *Durban Mus. Novit.*, vol. vii, 4, 1963, pp. 108, 109, whose work is also quoted by Hall and Moreau, records *N. a. nigritemporalis* from Bela Vista, Maputo, southern Sul do Save, Moçambique. The range of Brubru populations showing the lateral head characters of *N. a. nigritemporalis* must therefore be adjusted to include the Tete and Manica e Sofala districts and the littoral of Sul do Save, southern Moçambique, and the north-eastern border of Zululand.

The Durban Museum collection contains no less than fifteen specimens from southern Moçambique (*i.e.*, Moçambique south of the Zambesi) with the lateral head character generally ascribed to *N. a. nigritemporalis* Reichenow, 1892: Ngoma (Ngome), *c.* 24 km. S. of Mwanza, north-western Tanzania. Study of this series in conjunction with others of *N. a. nigritemporalis* from Tanzania, Zambia and Malawi shows that while such southern populations are like *nigritemporalis* in the head character, they differ quite markedly in that the adults are whiter over the sides of the neck, have a broader and whiter dorsal stripe, and are markedly whiter over the rump, the black scaling greatly reduced. *N. a. nigritemporalis* ranges south to about the Zambesi, south of which it is replaced by the following undescribed form:

***Nilaus afer miombensis*, subsp. nov.**

Type: ♂, adult. 10 km. W. of Vilanculos, Inhambane district, Sul do Save, southern Moçambique, at 22° 01' S., 35° 15' E. 20 June, 1971. Collected by P. A. Clancey. In the collection of the Durban Museum. D. M. Reg. No. 26, 629.

Diagnosis: Differs from *N. a. nigritemporalis*, named in the first instance from north-western Tanzania, in that the adult ♂ is more extensively white over the lateral surfaces of the neck, and has a much broader and more snowy dorsal streak; lower back and rump more extensively and purer white, the black fringing or scaling to the same feathers much narrower, resulting in a much whiter pygal facies. Also with a rather more prominent black loreal mark, purer white areas in wings, and slightly paler and more diffuse latero-ventral streaks.

The adult ♀ differs from that of *nigritemporalis* in having the

dark dorsal surfaces more slate, less brownish, black, the dorsal streak whiter, not buffish or vinaceous tinged, and the ground to the lower back and rump whiter, as described for the male, the black scaling narrower. Pale facial surfaces whiter. Below, with a plain white throat, and red-brown streaks greatly reduced and restricted to the sides of the breast in most; also light areas in wings pure white, not buffish tinged.

Material examined: 24. (*Southern Moçambique:* Bela Vista, Vilanculos, Rumbaçaça, Vila Franca do Save, Revue (near Vila de Manica), Muanza, Inhaminga and Lacerdonia. *Rhodesia:* Gulvere Borehole at 21° 49' S., 31° 56' E.; Murumbini, Sabi/Lundi confluence.) *N. a. brubru*, 94; *N. a. solivagus*, 158; *N. a. nigritemporalis*, 83; *N. a. massaicus*, 4; *N. a. minor*, 1.

Range: Typically from the littoral of southern Moçambique, certainly from the lower Zambesi R. at Lacerdonia, south to north-eastern Zululand on the coastal flats. North of the Save R., extends west to the Rhodesian frontier, and on the middle Save (Sabi R.) reaching into Rhodesian territory at the Sabi/Lundi confluence and on the Nuanetsi R. at 21° 49' S., 31° 56' E., where intergrading with *solivagus*.

Measurements of the Type: Wing (flattened) 83,5, culmen from base 20, tarsus 21,5, tail 54,5 mm.

Remarks: Through the kindness of Mr. M. P. Stuart Irwin, of the National Museum of Rhodesia, the whole of that museum's extensive series of *N. afer* has been placed at my disposal for study. Use of this large material along with the series already in the Durban Museum collection has enabled me to define the characters and ranges of the southern African forms of this small shrike with more accuracy than was possible hitherto. Variation of taxonomic significance affects both sexes, the main parameters being (*a*) variation in size as revealed by standard wing-length measurements, (*b*) the extent of the supercilia, (*c*) the extent and depth of colour of the latero-ventral streaking, (*d*) the colour of the dorsal streak and of the wing-bar, (*e*) the degree to which the rump is scaled with black (mainly in males), and (*f*) in females, the presence or absence of blackish streaking or marmoration over the fore-throat and upper breast. Variation in the juvenal dress is also of taxonomic significance.

In South Africa the races are all relatively well-defined, but are linked by zones of intergradation of varying depth as a result of

recent late secondary contact which has resulted in a population continuum over the species' entire distribution within current limits.

The South African forms of the Brubru will now stand as follows:

(a) ***Nilaus afer brubru*** (Latham)

Lanius brubru Latham *Index Ornith.*, Suppl., 1801. p. 20:
Cape of Good Hope, restricted to Goodhouse, lower Orange R., north-western Cape, by Macdonald, *Contr. Orn. West. S. Afr.*, 1957, p. 145.

Male with broad white supercilium extending to the nape; dorsal streak buffy or vinaceous-white. Below, with broad lateral Hazel stripes. Rump white with broad black fringes to feathers. Female as male above, but with dark surfaces olive-brown rather than glossy blue-black. Below, less starkly white, and lateral stripes often yellower Hazel and with a buffy penumbra. Face finely flecked and streaked dusky over white areas, not immaculate as in male.

Juvenal wholly white below, heavily but finely transversely barred with brownish black.

Wings of 10 ♂♂ from northern Cape and South-West Africa 87–90,5 (88,4), of 10 ♀♀ 83–91,5 (86,0) mm.

Material examined: 94. (*Northern Cape*: Pofadder, Kenhardt, Prieska, Kuruman; *South-West Africa*: Keetmanshoop, Windhoek, Okahandja, Omaruru; *Caprivi*: Linyanti; *Botswana*: Lehututu, Tsabong, Tshane, W. of Ghanzi, Dikgomo di Kae, Kafia, Kanye, Sekhuma Pan, Botletle R., Toromoja, Mababe, Kedia (L. Dow), Mumpswe, Nata, Francistown, Nthane, etc.; *Transvaal (brubru* \cong *solivagus*): Northam, Pretoria; *Western Rhodesia (brubru* \cong *solivagus*): Syringa, Bulawayo, Wankie; *Zambia (brubru* \cong *nigritemporalis*): Nangweshi, S. of Luete, Chiolola (Sesheke), Mazabuka, Namwala, Chilanga.)

Range: North-western Cape along the Orange R., extending south in riverine acacia in places, as in Bushmanland and Kenhardt, the northern Cape, western Orange Free State, South-West Africa, Botswana, western Transvaal and western Matabeleland, Rhodesia, where intergrading with *N. a. solivagus*, southern Barotseland and south-western Zambia where intergrading with *N. a. nigritemporalis*, southern Cuando-Cubango and southern Huila, Angola, extending in the north-west in Angola to about Luanda. Intergrades with both *N. a. nigritemporalis* and *N. a. affinis* in south-central Angola.

(b) ***Nilaus afer solivagus*** Clancey

Nilaus afer solivagus Clancey, *Bull. Brit. Orn. Club*, vol. lxxviii, 4, 1958, p. 75: Lubuli, near Nsoko, south-eastern Swaziland.

Male as in *brubru* but differs in having the latero-ventral stripes darker and much narrower (Chestnut). Female differs sharply in having the entire fore-throat variably finely striated or marmorated with black, not plain white; rusty brown latero-ventral streaks more diffuse in series. Size ranging smaller. Juvenal as in *N. a. brubru*.

Wings of 10 ♂♂ from Swaziland, eastern Transvaal and Rhodesia 81–87 (84,5), of 10 ♀♀ 80–85 (83,4) mm.

Material examined: 158. (*Natal and Zululand*: Pietermaritzburg, Dundee, Mkuzi; *Swaziland*: Lubuli, Sipofanen Bridge, Big Bend, Stegi; *Moçambique*: Bela Vista; *eastern Transvaal*: Newington; *Rhodesia*: Bulawayo, Umguza, Lupani, Wankie, Victoria Falls, Selukwe, Umvuma, Salisbury, Mazoe, Brinsham Farm, Buhera, Charama Plateau (Gokwe), Malimasimbi, Chatsworth, etc.; *Zambia (solivagus* \cong *nigritemporalis*) Katombora Rapids, Sesheke, N. shore of L. Kariba, Munyumbwe (16° 39' S., 27° 47' E.), Mazabuka, Namwala, Chilanga.)

Range: Natal and Zululand (except north-east), Swaziland, interior and western Sul do Save, Moçambique, eastern and northern Transvaal, and most of Rhodesia on the plateau. Intergrades broadly with *brubru* to the west of its range, with *nigritemporalis* to the north in south-central Zambia, and with *miombensis* to the east.

(c) ***Nilaus afer miombensis*** Clancey

Nilaus afer miombensis Clancey, *Durban Mus. Novit.*, vol. ix, 9, 1971, p. 123: 10 km. W. of Vilanculos, Inhambane district, Sul do Save, southern Moçambique.

Male differs from that of *solivagus* in that the white supercilium terminates above the eye and is not extended back to the nape; dorsal streak white, not pale buff or vinaceous, and rump more extensively white, the black fringes to the feathers reduced. Below, with the latero-ventral stripes still further reduced, and vestigial over the flanks. Female with dark upper surfaces blacker, and dorsal streak white or whitish, not buff or deep vinaceous. Face with pale areas whiter, lacking much of the dusky mottling and streaking. Below, largely pure white over the entire fore-throat, lacking much of the blackish streaking and marbling of *solivagus*, and reddish brown lateral stripes greatly reduced and more or less restricted to the sides of the breast. In the wing, the wing-bar is white or pale vinaceous-white, not buff as in freshly moulted *solivagus*. Size a little smaller than *solivagus*.

Wings of 10 ♂♂ 79–84,5 (82,4), of 10 ♀♀ 77,5–84 (80,5) mm.

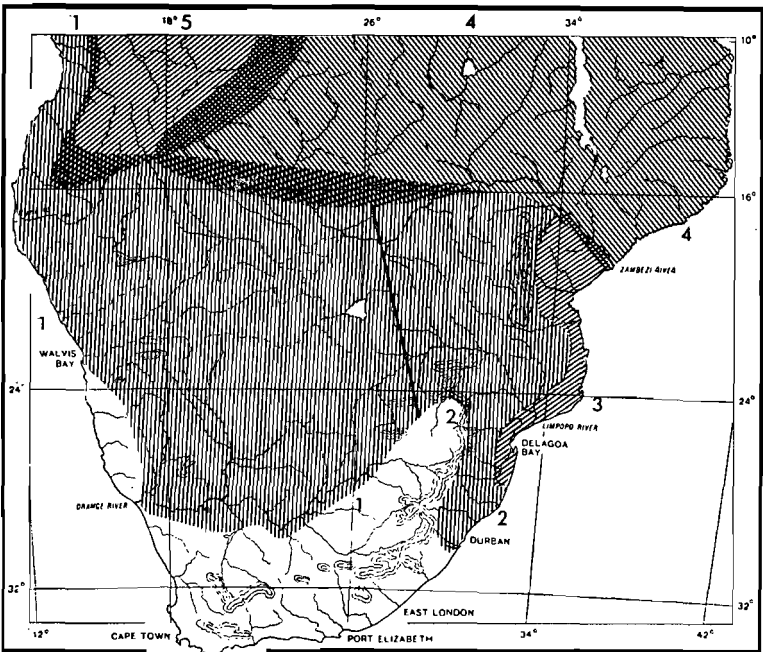
Material examined: 24 (details as given in above description).

Range: North-eastern Zululand and the littoral of Sul do Save, Moçambique. North of the Save R. extends west over Manica e

Sofala to the Rhodesian frontier, reaching to the Sabi/Lundi confluence, in south-eastern Rhodesia, and to the lower reaches of the Zambesi R. Intergrades to the west of its range with *solivagus*.

Remarks: In the marked reduction in the extent of the latero-ventral stripes, particularly in adult females, *N. a. miombensis* reveals a closely analogous character shift to that present to the west of *N. a. nigritemporalis*, which culminates in the race *N. a. affinis* of central and west-central Angola, in which both sexes lack red-brown lateral ventral striping.

A single juvenal of *miombensis* suggests that this plumage also shows good racial characters. A skin taken at Mapinhane, near Vilanculos, on 5 June, 1966, differs sharply from Zambian juvenals of *nigritemporalis* in having the black streaking to the fore-throat and upper breast finer, and the rest of the underside plain white, lacking both the streaking and barring over the sides and flanks and pronounced rusty buff wash present in *nigritemporalis*; the wing-stripe is also markedly whiter.



MAP III

Sketch-map showing the racial mosaic of *Nilaus afer* (Latham) in southern Africa.

1. *Nilaus afer brubru* (Latham).
2. *Nilaus afer solivagus* Clancey.
3. *Nilaus afer miombensis* Clancey.
4. *Nilaus afer nigritemporalis* Reichenow.
5. *Nilaus afer affinis* Bocage.

Stable populations of the next taxon do not occur in zoogeographical South Africa, but as birds showing the characters of this subspecies occur freely in the northern Mashonaland, Rhodesia, and Tete district, Moçambique, populations, its characters and range are defined as follows:

***Nilaus afer nigritemporalis* Reichenow**

Nilaus nigritemporalis Reichenow, *Journ. f. Ornith.*, vol. xl, 1892, p. 36: Ngoma, c. 24 km. S. of Mwanza, north-western Tanzania.

Nilaus nigritemporalis occidentalis White, *Ibis*, 1946, p. 206: Balovale, north-western Zambia.

Male differs from that of *N. a. miombensis*, as defined above, in having less extensive white over the sides of the neck and dorsal stripe, the latter creamy or vinaceous, not pure white; rump duller white and feathers broadly fringed black, resulting in a duller, more heavily scaled rump patch. Below, with the latero-ventral stripes rather darker and well developed over the flanks, not largely vestigial over such surfaces as in *miombensis*. Black loreal spot less prominent. Wing-bar tinged vinaceous, not almost white. Female differs in having the dark dorsal surfaces more olive-brown, less blackish or slate, and pale dorsal stripe more strongly ochraceous of buffy, not almost white as in coastal Moçambique birds; rump with broader black fringing to feathers. Below, usually with the throat and upper breast more heavily streaked with black (in this like *solivagus*), appearing less snowy, and red-brown lateral stripes well developed, extending from the sides of the upper breast down over the flanks. Wing-bar strongly buffish.

The juvenal differs from those of *N. a. brubru* and *N. a. solivagus* in having the dusky ventral markings in the form of fine longitudinal striae rather than heavier transverse bars, and the sides of the breast, body and flanks are washed with buff or rusty, which overlay not present in either *brubru* or *solivagus*. The juvenal of *miombensis* also appears to lack the buff ventral wash. Size as in *N. a. solivagus*.

Wings of 10 ♂♂ from Zambia and Tanzania 80–87 (85.1), of 10 ♀♀ 81–85 (83.6) mm.

Material examined: 83. (*Tanzania*: Songea, Kigive (near Bani), Gingame (? spelling), Taboia; *Malawi*: Port Herald and district, Chiromo, Livingstonia; *Moçambique* (*miombensis* \cong *nigritemporalis*): W. of Tambara Fort; *Rhodesia* (*solivagus* \cong *nigritemporalis*): Gache Gache (Kariba), E. of Chirundu; *Zambia*: Ndola, Mwekera, Kasama,

Mporokoso, Kasusu, Broken Hill, Fort Jameson, Kabompo Boma, Serenje, Luamala R., etc.)

Range: Northern Moçambique, Malawi, Zambia where intergrading broadly in south and south-west with *N. a. brubru* and *N. a. solivagus*, eastern and north-eastern Angola, the southern and south-eastern Congo in the Kasai, Katanga and Marungu, and central and western Tanzania. Eastern and south-eastern Tanzanian birds run small, the wing-length usually 80 mm. and below, but are coloured as in *nigritemporalis*, and may represent a valid race, for which the name *N. a. brevialatus* Grote, 1938: Magogoni, Pangani R., north-eastern Tanzania, is available. However, an average size-difference on its own is perhaps insufficient grounds for recognition, as birds as small as toptypical *brevialatus* occur well back from the coast as at Songea, Southern Province, Tanzania, and Livingstonia, northern Malawi. Rand, in the continuation of Peters' *Check-list Birds of the World*, vol. ix, 1960, p. 316, places *N. a. brevialatus* in the synonymy of *N. a. nigritemporalis*.