



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

Bulletin of the British Ornithologists' Club.

London :The Club,1893-

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

v.77 (1957): <http://www.biodiversitylibrary.org/item/125677>

Page(s): Page 83, Page 84

Contributed by: Natural History Museum Library, London

Sponsored by: Natural History Museum Library, London

Generated 17 April 2015 7:33 AM

<http://www.biodiversitylibrary.org/pdf4/038550400125677>

This page intentionally left blank.

fuscata Linnaeus, and *Sterna macrura* Naumann. Of these I found *Sterna caspia* Pallas and *Sterna bergii* Lichtenstein breeding together; on 10th December, 1936, I banded 28 of these young birds. Subsequent visits resulted in the positive identification of non-breeding remaining flocks of the Palaearctic migratory terns *Sterna hirundo* Linnaeus and *Sterna macrura* Naumann, and of the locating of an unidentified tern, which superficially resembled *S. hirundo*, and which I found breeding alongside the graceful *S. dougallii*. In an effort to clear up the doubt in mind as to the correct specific identity of the strange tern species I ringed 40 chicks from the mixed colony on 25th August, 1937, and 25th August, 1940. A sub-adult bird bearing one of my rings, No. 14 (banded 25th August, 1937), was recovered at Cintza, near East London, on 15th January, 1938, and it has been identified by Dr. R. Cushman Murphy of the American Museum of Natural History, New York, as an example of the Roseate Tern. On 26th January, 1941, another of my ringed terns was recovered, this time under rather exceptional circumstances. On 20th January, 1941, off the coast of St. Helena, a tern bearing my ring No. 24 (banded 25th August, 1940) flew aboard the SS. *Durban Castle* and was taken by the captain of the ship, Captain J. Norman. The bird and the ring were shown to the late Dr. E. L. Gill, then Director of the South African Museum, Cape Town, who referred the matter to me. This skin, which is now in the ornithological research collection of the East London Museum, has been identified by Dr. Murphy under date 29th May, 1956, as being a sub-adult example of his *S.v. tristanensis*. This fortunate ringing recovery shows that the Tristan race of the Kerguelen Tern does breed on certain of the seabird islands off the coast of Cape Province, South Africa.

In addition to the discovery of the breeding of *S.v. tristanensis* on Bird Island, Algoa Bay, the location of sizable breeding colonies of *S. dougallii* alongside those of the former species is noteworthy. The correct racial identification of the austral African population of *S. dougallii* is still a matter for conjecture. Peters, *Check List of Birds of the World*, vol. ii, 1934, p. 334, gives the range of nominate *S. dougallii* (type-locality: Cumbrae, Firth of Clyde, Scotland) as the western and eastern coasts of the North Atlantic from Sable Island to Long Island, in Florida, Bermuda, the Bahamas, British Honduras, the Lesser Antilles and Aruba Island; in the British Isles, islands off Jutland, coast of Brittany and coast of Tunisia. It is stated to winter as far south as South Africa. *S.d. arideensis* Mathews has been described as a breeding race from the Seychelles and other archipelagos in the western Indian Ocean, but Peters, *loc. cit.*, p. 335, is of the opinion that this race is perhaps not distinguishable from *S.d. bangsi* Mathews, described from Foochow, China. Breeding material of the South African population should be compared with topotypical examples of *S.d. dougallii*, *S.d. arideensis* and *S.d. bangsi*, and I have already taken steps to acquire this fundamental research material.

On the status of *Mirafra rufipilea* (Vieillot)

by CAPT. C. H. B. GRANT and MR. C. W. MACKWORTH-PRAED

Received 29th November, 1956

In the *Bull. B.O.C.* 75, p. 33, 1955, we discussed this name, agreeing with those authors who consider it to be indeterminate. In the references we

gave we inadvertently failed to include that of Mr. J. D. Macdonald's article "Notes on the Taxonomy of the Clapper Larks of South Africa," *Ibis*, 94, p. 629, 1952, where the author on pp. 630 and 631 gives his reasons for accepting this name, giving the type locality in the Maltahohe district, South-West Africa. This article we had studied, but since 1952 we have also studied Levillant's Travels and laid them down on a modern map and this shows that Levillant went east from the Cape to the Great Fish River in eastern Cape Province and was never farther north than Graaf Reinet and the Sneeuw Bergen. On his northern trip he was in the south-eastern areas of South-West Africa as far north as about the latitude of Keetmanshoop. We wished to point out that Levillant was not in the area where the red race occurs and that his plate 198 in *Ois d'Afrique*, 4, 1805, does not agree with the races from the western and southern side of Cape Province, that is to say, those races listed as (1), (2) and (3) in Mr. Macdonald's paper, nor with those in South West Africa. We cannot therefore accept Vieillot's *Mirafra rufipilea* as determinable on present knowledge.

The "White Wing-barring" and other Variants in the Carrion Crow and Rook

by DR. JAMES M. HARRISON

Received 26th January, 1957.

The condition of "mottling" which may be either whitish, greyish or even greyish-white in local populations of the Rook, *Corvus frugilegus* Linnaeus has been discussed fully in various communications in the BULLETIN (*antea* 69:117-8 and 70:7 and 18-9). Recently Mr. Bryan Sage has recorded a similar variant in the Carrion Crow, *Corvus corone corone* Linnaeus (*antea* 76:13-4).^{*} Only the wing of the specimen, which had been shot at Cotherbridge, in Worcestershire, was available for examination and was described as having "a wide brownish-white bar extending across both webs of most of the primaries, secondaries and greater wing-coverts." The bars are stated to be subterminal. Further discussion by the same author upon these interesting variants are to be found in his paper (*antea* 76:25-28).

Evidence is accumulating to show that these "mottled" and "barred" corvines are in all probability not uncommon and since the above communications were made, I can call to mind a family party with three young Carrion Crows with white barred wings seen at Barksore in north Kent in the winter of 1951. In the summer of 1956 another family of the same species had three young birds with white wing-bars at Seal, Kent. Two were obtained and both were anatomically sexed as males. Mr. Sage also possesses a specimen which he kindly allowed me to examine; this bird is a female with white wing-barring, obtained at Northaw, in Hertfordshire, so that the last three specimens mentioned show that the condition is not sex-linked. A further instance, which was observed by Mr. Musson near Borstal, Kent, in October 1956, has been reported to me, while in *The Field* (24th January, 1957) another example is recorded by Mr. Michael

^{*} A case of "mottling" has now been recorded in a Jackdaw, *C. monedula spermologus* Vieillot (*antea* 77:55), further evidence of presumed recessive patterning in a species of the genus *Corvus*.