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### MISCELLANEOUS TAXONOMIC NOTES ON AFRICAN BIRDS VII

*by*

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#### THE SOUTH AFRICAN RACES OF THE BLACK-COLLARED BARBET *LYBIUS TORQUATUS* (DUMONT)

The Black-collared Barbet *Lybius torquatus* (Dumont) is one of the most widely distributed and abundant member of the Capitonidae found within South African sub-continental limits. The present writer, in his recent review of the geographical variation exhibited by the South African populations, Bulletin of the British Ornithologists' Club, vol. 73, 9; 1953, pp. 102-104, admits three subspecies, namely, *L. t. torquatus* (Dumont), 1816: south-eastern Cape Province, *L. t. congicus* (Reichenow), 1898: Malanje, Angola, and *L. t. zombæ* (Shelley), 1893: Zomba, southern Nyasaland, while expressing doubt as to the accuracy of using the name *L. t. congicus* for the populations occurring as far south as Southern Rhodesia and southern Mozambique.

Through the kindness of the Directors of the Transvaal Museum, Pretoria; the Natal Museum, Pietermaritzburg; the Kaffrarian Museum, King William's Town; the Museu Dr. Alvaro de Castro, Lourenço Marques, and the National Museum of Southern Rhodesia, Bulawayo, I have recently been able to study the actual skins or statistics of over four hundred examples of this barbet now preserved

in southern African museums. For the loan of specimens from Angola I am indebted to Dr. Austin L. Rand of the Chicago Natural History Museum, U.S.A., who has placed at my disposal material recently collected in the south-west of that country by G. Heinrich, as well as examples from near the type-locality of *L. t. congicus*. I am particularly grateful to Mr. R. H. N. Smithers, Director, National Museum of Southern Rhodesia, for his valuable assistance in this research.

The study of this impressive volume of material shows that the taxonomic arrangement of the South African populations proposed in my paper of 1953 is substantially correct, though it has since been ascertained that *L. t. congicus* is confined mainly to Angola and the southern Congo, and that the South African sub-continental populations which I referred to it actually belong to an undescribed race. What are believed to be stable populations of *L. t. congicus* certainly occur within our limits in the lower Okovango drainage.

The material in the collections of the museums listed above is sufficiently comprehensive to permit of accurate ranges being drafted for each of the races which it is proposed to recognize in this paper, and, for the sake of completeness, I have listed briefly the extralimital forms of *L. torquatus* at the end of my formal treatment of the South African races, which is as follows:

(1) ***Lybius torquatus torquatus*** (Dumont)

*Bucco torquatus* Dumont, "Dict. Sci. Nat.," éd. Levrault, vol. iv, 1816, pl. 28, p. 56: Brazil, error=South Africa *apud* Goffin, *Mus. Pays-Bas*, 1, 1863, Buccones, p. 4. The south-eastern Cape Province is the suggested restricted type-locality.

*Characters*: Forehead, fore-crown, cheeks, ear-coverts, malar-surfaces, and throat light red (SSO-9-12°). Hind crown, nape, sides of neck and upper breast glossy blue-black. Mantle olivaceous brown, finely vermiculated with a darker shade; rump similar but more washed with yellowish. Lower breast, sides of body, flanks and abdominal surfaces dull yellow, varyingly vermiculated with dark grey or brown, and sometimes present a slight reddish suffusion.

Wings ♂♀ 88.5-96 (92.2), culmens from base 23-26 (24.4), tails 52-59 (62) (56.2) mm. 32 measured.

*Material*: Eastern Cape Province, Natal, Zululand, southern Swaziland and Transvaal highveld, 85. Intergrades *L. t. torquatus*  $\gtrsim$  *L. t. lucidiventris* from north-eastern Zululand, northern Swaziland, eastern and north-eastern Transvaal, 55.

*Type:* Not traced.

*Range:* From the southern and eastern districts of the Cape Province through Pondoland and East Griqualand to Natal, Zululand and southern Swaziland, and thence northwards to the eastern Orange Free State, Transvaal highveld, and parts of south-eastern Bechuanaland. Intergrading with the next race in north-eastern Zululand, northern Swaziland, northern Transvaal and the eastern lowveld.

*Remarks:* This race is characterized by the densely vermiculated, dull yellowish lower under-parts.

(2) ***Lybius torquatus lucidiventris***, subsp. nov.

*Characters:* Red of head and throat slightly deeper than in *L. t. torquatus*. Mantle colouration lighter and vermiculations more prominent. Saliiently different on the ventral surfaces: lower breast and abdomen clear pale yellow without dark grey or brownish vermiculations, and sides of the body and flanks white or whitish yellow, with only occasional dark streaking. Closely similar in size.

Wings ♂♀ 86–96 (91.3), culmens from base 22.5–26.5 (24.3), tails 53–61 (56.2) mm. 20 topotypes measured.

*Material:* Southern Portuguese East Africa, 65; Southern Rhodesia, 61; Caprivi Strip (unstable), 10; Northern Rhodesia (southern Barotseland, Lusaka district, Mpika, Kasama, etc.), 90 (*Note:* many examples from the northern and western districts included in this figure are obviously representative of intergrading populations between the present race and *L. t. congicus*); western Nyasaland, 3. The populations of northern Bechuanaland are treated independently below, because what appear to be relatively stable populations of *L. t. congicus* are found in this region.

*Type:* ♂, adult. Mchabezi, Matopo Hills, Southern Rhodesia. (20° 20' S., 28° 46' 30" E.). 3 May, 1954. Collector's name not noted on label. In the collection of the National Museum of Southern Rhodesia, Bulawayo. N.M.15969.

*Measurements of Type:* Wing (flattened) 96, culmen from base 25, tarsus 23, tail 61 mm.

*Range:* Southern Portuguese East Africa from just north of the Zululand border north to the Zambesi River and the western districts of Nyasaland, but not in southern Nyasaland, the southern parts of northern Portuguese East Africa (lower Zambesia) and the coastlands south to about Beira and Sofala Bay, where *L. t. zombæ* occurs.

Ranges north-westwards through Southern Rhodesia and eastern Bechuanaland to most of Northern Rhodesia. Intergrades with *L. t. congicus* in the Caprivi Strip and in western Barotseland and along the northern borders of Northern Rhodesia and presumably in adjacent Belgian Congo territory. In the extreme east of Northern Rhodesia and in western Nyasaland a diminution in size is observable, revealing the influence of *L. t. zombæ*.

*Remarks:* The clear, very whitish and unmarked lower ventral surface is the major subspecific criterion of this new race.

(3) ***Lybius torquatus congicus*** (Reichenow)

*Melanobucco torquatus congicus* Reichenow, in Werthe's, "Die mittleren Hochländer nördlichen Deutsch-Ost-Afrika," 1898, p. 273: Congo Region—*Type* from Malanje, Angola.

*Characters:* Similar to *L. t. lucidiventris* but red of head and throat deeper, inclining to crimson rather than vermilion (S-7-12°). Mantle darker and vermiculations much coarser. Vermiculations on the lesser coverts of the wings coarser. Lower ventral surfaces less whitish and more strongly washed with deep yellow or greenish yellow, and in Angola topotypes the lower breast and abdomen are prominently vermiculated with brown, as in the nominate race of South Africa. Tail-length slightly greater.

Wings ♂♀ 89-95 (91.3), culmens from base 22.5-25 (23.6), tails 59-60 (59.5) mm. 5 measured.

*Material:* Angola (Chitau), 2; Northern Rhodesia (northern Kaonde Lunda), 2; south-western Tanganyika Territory, 1; northern Bechuanaland (Okovango Swamp region), 3.

*Type:* In the Zoological Museum, Berlin.

*Range:* Northern and eastern Angola, southern Belgian Congo in the Katanga east to the Marungu Mountains and Lake Tanganyika, parts of western and southern Tanganyika Territory, and in some northern districts of Northern Rhodesia (Mwinilunga to Chingola (*vide* White and Winterbottom, "Check List of the Birds of Northern Rhodesia," 1949, p. 68). From eastern Angola apparently extending southward into northern Bechuanaland in the Okovango drainage, where the birds are not quite typical. Perhaps also ranges north into the southern savannas of French Equatorial Africa (*vide* Malbrant and Maclatchy, "Faune de l'Equateur Africain Francais," vol. 1, 1949, p. 271).

*Remarks:* The important subspecific characters of *L. t. congicus* are the deep, almost crimson, red of the head and throat, densely vermiculated mantle and lesser wing-coverts, and bright yellow lower ventral surface. The tail-length also reaches its maximum in this race.

The true status of the northern Bechuanaland birds is not clear from the small amount of material at present available. Three specimens from Maun, on the edge of the Okovango Swamp, certainly agree closely with Angola topotypes of *L. t. congicus*, though tending to be small in size, thus—wings 86–89, tails 57.5–58 mm. Caprivi Strip specimens, ten of which have been available for study, on the other hand obviously represent an intergrading population (*L. t. lucidiventris*  $\geq$  *L. t. congicus*), as do those from adjacent Barotseland. Northern Bechuanaland birds have already been placed as *L. t. congicus* by de Schauensee, "Proceedings of the Academy of Natural Sciences of Philadelphia," vol. ciii, 1951, p. 42, though further collecting may well show that the populations of the region are essentially intermediate in character. In the event of such a finding, the race *L. t. congicus* should be deleted from the South African sub-continental list.

(4) ***Lybius torquatus zombæ*** (Shelley)

*Melanobucco zombæ* Shelley, "Ibis," 1893, p. 10; Zomba, Nyasaland.

*Characters:* Similar to *L. t. lucidiventris* as above defined but red of head and throat paler and duller, more pinkish or brick-coloured. Size smaller.

Wings ♂♀ 85–89.5 (87.9), culmens from base 23–25 (23.9), tails 52.5–56 (53.6) mm. 14 measured.

*Material:* Southern Nyasaland, 6; southern Portuguese East Africa (Beira district), 8.

*Type:* In the British Museum (Nat. Hist.), London.

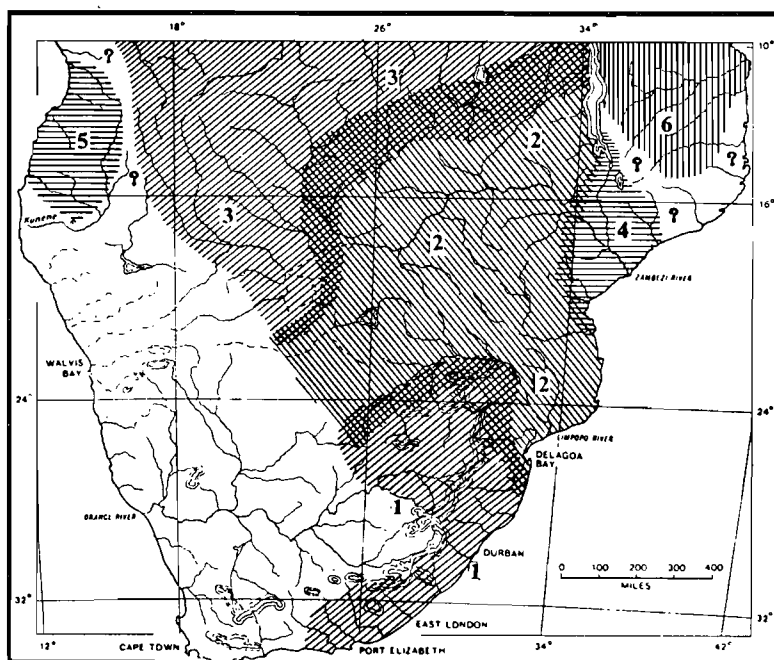
*Range:* Not adequately understood. Southern Nyasaland from Fort Maguire southward, and in Portuguese East Africa in lower Zambesia, ranging as far south as Beira and Sofala Bay in the coastal districts.

*Remarks:* The diagnostic characters of this race are the dull pinkish or brick-red of the head and throat, very whitish lower ventral surface and small size.

EXTRALIMITAL RACES

(5) *Lybius torquatus* ? new race

*Characters:* Closely similar to the nominate race of South Africa but with a less extensive red area on the forehead; mantle and rump darker and browner, less washed with greenish, and vermiculations



*LYBIUS TORQUATUS* (Dumont)

Map showing the approximate ranges of the southern African races of the Black-collared Barbet

- |                                       |                                     |
|---------------------------------------|-------------------------------------|
| 1. <i>L. t. torquatus</i> (Dumont)    | 4. <i>L. t. zombæ</i> (Shelley)     |
| 2. <i>L. t. lucidiventris</i> Clancey | 5. <i>L. t.</i> ? new race          |
| 3. <i>L. t. congicus</i> (Reichenow)  | 6. <i>L. t. albigularis</i> Neumann |

Areas of cross-hatching = zones of intergradation

coarser and more prominent. Lower ventral surface a dull admixture of white and yellow with little obvious freckling on the lower breast and abdomen. Size as in *L. t. congicus*.

*Range:* South and west of the range of *L. t. congicus* in the drier parts of western and southern Angola in Benguela and Mossamedes.

(6) **Lybius torquatus albigularis** Neumann

*Lybius zombæ albigularis* Neumann, "Bulletin of the British Ornithologists' Club," vol. xxi, 1908, p. 46: Songea, Southern Province, Tanganyika Territory.

*Characters:* Similar to *L. t. zombæ* but with the red of the head and throat replaced by blackish spotted with white. Slightly smaller in size.

Wings ♂♀ 80–87 mm.

*Range:* The Southern Province of Tanganyika Territory from Kilwa to Songea and in the Rovuma drainage, southward to Portuguese Niassa. Precise limits in the south not at present known.

(7) **Lybius torquatus pumilio** Grote

*Lybius torquatus pumilio* Grote, "Ornithologische Monatsberichte," vol. xxxv, 1927, p. 144: Uvira, northern end of Lake Tanganyika, eastern Belgian Congo.

*Characters:* Similar to *L. t. conigicus* but averaging smaller in size.

Wings 83–91 mm. (After Chapin, "Birds of the Belgian Congo," part ii, 1939, p. 523).

*Range:* Imperfectly known and understood. Eastern Belgian Congo from the Lualaba River eastwards to the Ruzizi, and the low country at the northern end of Lake Tanganyika, ? and in adjacent Ruanda-Urundi and north-western Tanganyika Territory.

(8) **Lybius torquatus irroratus** (Cabanis)

*Pogonorhynchus irroratus* Cabanis, "Journal für Ornithologie," 1878, p. 205: Mombasa, coastal Kenya Colony.

*Characters:* A small-sized race with coarsely vermiculated mantle and lesser wing coverts, much as in *L. t. conigicus*. Lower ventral surfaces whitish and almost unmarked, and similar in this respect to *L. t. lucidiventris* and *L. t. zombæ*. Red of head and throat unlike any other race, being a brighter, more orange-vermilion (SSO–11–12°). Red feathers distinctly lanceolate, especially on the lower throat, where, being superimposed on the black breast-band, they have the appearance of hackles.

Wings 78–88 mm.

*Range:* From about Lamu in coastal Kenya Colony southward to eastern and central Tanganyika Territory (west as far as Dodoma and south to Dar-es-Salaam).

### THREE NEW RACES OF BIRDS FROM THE MASSIF OF BASUTOLAND

During the latter part of February and the first fortnight of March, 1956, a party from the Durban Museum under the Assistant Director, Mr. A. L. Bevis, was able to operate at Mamathe's, near Teyateyaneng, and in the high mountainous country to the east of Maseru, Basutoland, mainly at altitudes ranging from 7,000' to 8,000' a.s.l. A collection of 155 bird specimens was formed, and study of this interesting material reveals the existence of at least three new races which are apparently confined to the high mountains of Basutoland. These are formally described below.

The success of the venture owes much to the initiative and drive on the part of the Durban Museum's young taxidermist, Mr. M. O. E. Baddeley, who had to work under adverse climatic conditions. The Museum is grateful to Mr. C. Jacot-Guillarmod for his kindly assistance, and to Her Majesty's Basutoland Administration for the granting of the necessary permits.

#### ***Anthus similis petricolus*, subsp. nov.**

*Type:* ♂, first winter. Mamathe's, Basutoland. Altitude 5,700' a.s.l. 29 February, 1956. Collected by M. O. E. Baddeley. In the collection of the Durban Museum.

*Diagnosis:* Most closely allied to *Anthus similis nicholsoni* Sharpe, 1884: Sigonell, on the Vaal River, but differs in being darker and rather more heavily striated above. On the under-parts usually less deep buff and rather more heavily spotted on the lower throat and breast. *A. s. nicholsoni* is always a redder or more buffy coloured race than *A. s. petricolus*. Similar in size.

*Material:* *A. s. petricolus*, 7♂♂, 2♀♀, 2♂♂ juvs.; *A. s. nicholsoni*, 67; *A. s. leucocraspedon* Reichenow, 15; *A. s. palliditinctus* Clancey, 3; *A. s. nyassæ* Neumann, 7; *A. s. neumannianus* Collin & Hartert, 1.

*Range:* The high mountains of the massif of Basutoland.

*Remarks:* All our specimens of this distinctive new race were obtained in the relatively low-lying area of Basutoland in the