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MISCELLANEOUS TAXONOMIC NOTES ON AFRICAN BIRDS XXX

by

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VARIATION IN THE SOUTHERN AFRICAN POPULATIONS OF THE LAUGHING DOVE *STREPTOPELIA* *SENEGALENSIS* (LINNAEUS)

Virtually all the wide-ranging, open country pigeons and doves of southern Africa whose ranges include the whole or part of the South West Arid District exhibit marked response to the arid conditions obtaining in having distinctly paler populations resident or breeding in this xeric region. The Cape Turtle Dove *Streptopelia capicola* (Sundevall) has two South West Arid races, namely *S.c. damarensis* and *S.c. onguati*, while the Redeyed Turtle Dove *Streptopelia semitorquata* (Rüppell) is represented along the northern periphery of the region by rather paler but variable populations which lack the requisite constancy to be considered worthy of nomenclatural recognition, though the trend was clearly evident in material studied in Durban some years ago. Two small-sized, widely distributed doves, the Emeraldspotted Dove *Turtur chalcospilos* (Wagler) and the Namaqua Dove *Oena capensis* (Linnaeus) are also represented by pallid races in the South West Arid District, the first by the race *T.c. volkmanni* and the latter by *O.c. anonyma*. In the case of the rupicolous Speckled Pigeon *Columba guinea* Linnaeus, a pale race, *C.g. bradfieldi*, extends from the arid regions

Sentinel Ranch, Diti, Zambesi R. valley, etc.); **Transvaal**, 1 (Northam); **O.F.S.** and **Lesotho**, 2 (April and September).

Range: Little Namaqualand, Bushmanland, and northern Cape in Gordonia and northern Kuruman districts to South-West Africa, Botswana (except for Ngamiland swamp region and Chobe R., where replaced by nominate race), western Transvaal and western Matabeleland, Rhodesia. Some populations of this aggregate range west of the breeding area during the dry winter months, mainly between May and early October, but judging by the Mt. Makulu specimen from as early as March, when reaching south-western Cape, western Orange Free State, Lesotho lowlands, parts of Rhodesia, and southern and south-western Zambia.

Measurements of the Type: Wing 137.5, tail 110 mm.

Remarks: Of the Rhodesian sample, some ten specimens available from Bulawayo and district are applicable to *divergens*. The breeding population of this part of Matabeleland appears to be an intergrading one between *divergens* and *senegalensis* judging by the breeding specimens available, and the true *divergens* from Bulawayo probably represent visitors from further west in the dry interior of southern Africa.

TWO NEW SUBSPECIES OF PASSERINE BIRDS FROM WESTERN ANGOLA

Study of adequate series of two monotypic passerine birds with ranges extending from western Angola, south to South-West Africa and the Republic of South Africa, reveals that their present monotypic status is incorrect and that they are in fact polytypic, with quite well-marked but undescribed races in western Angola. For the loan of recently collected, nicely prepared and adequate Angola series I am deeply indebted to Dr. A. A. da Rosa Pinto, Ornithologist of the Instituto de Investigação Científica de Angola, at Sá da Bandeira, Huila, Angola. I am also grateful to Mr. C. D. Quickelberge, Ornithologist, East London Museum, for the loan of further South-West African and Cape material to augment that already available in Durban.

Lanioturdus torquatus mesicus, subsp. nov.

Type: ♂, adult. Rio Nompaca, Mupanda, Huila, Angola. Altitude 1700 m. 29 April, 1965. Collected by A. M. Ferreira. In the collection of the Instituto de Investigação Científica de Angola, Sá da Bandeira. Reg.No.11,168.

Diagnosis: Compared with topotypical *L.t.torquatus* Waterhouse, 1838: inland from Walvis Bay, South-West Africa, differs in having the upper-parts in freshly moulted dress with the hind neck much less extensively white, the nuchal patch more invaded with black, the lateral stripes also much broader, and slightly darker, bluer, neutral grey over the mantle, scapulars and rump, the scapulars exhibiting more extensive black. Below, with a markedly broader black torque, and lateral grey breast panels distinctly larger in size and darker (Deep Gull Gray (Ridgway, pl.iii), *versus* Pale Neutral Gray (same pl.)), the white re-entrant over the mid-breast thereby constricted and less expansive than in nominate *torquatus*. In the wings, deeper, bluer, black throughout, the white apices to the remiges narrower, and revealing a smaller white speculum over the greater-coverts in series. In the otherwise white tail, the black drop-shaped apical spots to the innermost rectrices are larger. Size ranging distinctly larger, but with much overlap, thus: wings of 20 ♂♀ 83—93 (87.9), against 80.5—88 (83.6) mm. in 19 ♂♀ of *L.t.torquatus* from South-West Africa.

Material examined: *L.t.mesicus*, 20 (**Benguela:** Bocoio; **Moçamedes:** Chicambi, Calunda, Capangombe; **Huila:** Chingoroi, Camuciuo, Rio Nompaca (Mupanda), Virambundo (Gambos), Mirambondo (Gambos), Papalonomailo (Humpata), Lagoa Tacué, Lagoa Maquete, Quiteve, Cavalana (Cahama)). *L.t.torquatus*, 31 (**South-West Africa:** Windhoek district, Okahandja; **Angola:** Moçamedes: Chicate; **Huila:** Chitado (Cunene R.), Luamúcuá (Quiteve), Quiteve district, Cavalana (Cahama), Rio d'Ania (? spelling), Bituallo)).

Range: The mesic western periphery of the Rhodesian Highland District of Chapin in the escarpment country and adjacent regions of western Angola (west of 15° E.), from about 12° S. in Benguela, south to c. 15° S., in Moçamedes and western Huila, south of which it intergrades with nominate *torquatus*. Judging by the reasonable sample from Gambos and Canhama, Caculovar R., and about Quiteve to the east of these collecting centres at 16° 02' S., 15° 10' E., the zone of intergradation between *mesicus* and nominate *torquatus* lies between 15° and 16° in south-western Angola.

Measurement of the Type: Wing (flattened) 92 mm. Weight 35 gm.

Remarks: The populations here described as *L.t.mesicus* show in the marked increase of melanin in their contour plumage, wings and tail, the influence of the moist Angola highlands, compared with nominate *L.torquatus*, which is a xeric race centred on the Fore-Namib and associated sub-desert zones in the western aspects

of the South West Arid District, in a region far removed from any geographical feature enjoying a high precipitation regime.

Weight data taken from labels on the paratypical series of *L.t.mesicus* are as follows:

♂♀ 45 ?, 38, 35, 32 (2), 30 (4), 29, 28 (3), 26 (2), 25 (2), 23 gm.

***Nectarinia fusca inclusa*, subsp. nov.**

Type: ♂, adult. Lucira, Moçamedes, Angola. Taken at sea level. 12 November, 1969. Collected by A. M. Ferreira. In the collection of the Instituto de Investigação Científica de Angola, Sá da Bandeira. Reg. No. 30, 783.

Diagnosis: Adult male similar to *N.f.fusca* (Vieillot), 1819: Great Namaqualand, South-West Africa, but differs in having the entire breast below the metallic cupreous green or dull reddish violet plastron glossy jet black with a pronounced purple overlay, not dull, dark sooty brown as in *fusca*, and with the flanks, lower medio-ventral plane, crissum and under tail-coverts much whiter, lacking the buffy or brownish admixture present in nominate *fusca* as exemplified by the populations of the Karoo, Cape. The white also appears to be more extensively distributed than in nominate *fusca*, but differences in make of skin preclude evaluation of this possible criterion. Adult female. Not markedly different, but averaging slightly darker, more olive, brown over the upper-parts. Below, in fresh dress rather more strongly tinged with pale greenish yellow than in Cape birds. Similar in size.

Material examined: *N.f.inclusa*, 30 (**Moçamedes**: Tona, Capolopopo (Virei), Lucira, Calunda (Lucira), Chicambi (Lucira), Caraculo, Pedra Grande (Caraculo), Camihonga, S. Nicholau, Foz do Cunene); *N.f.fusca*, 67 (South-West Africa, 7: Cape Province, 60).

Range: South-western Angola on the coastal plain from Benguela, south through Moçamedes to the Cunene R., where it appears to meet and intergrade with nominate *fusca*, judging by the single Cunene male examined, which is intermediate towards nominate *fusca*.

Measurement of the Type: Wing (flattened) 55.5 mm. Weight 8 gm.

Remarks: The wings of 10 ♂♂ of *N.f.inclusa* measure 56—61 (57.8), of 9 ♀♀ 51—53.5 (52.1) mm. Weights of males range from 7—10, and of females 6—7 gm.

Mr. John G. Williams, then Ornithologist at the Coryndon (now National) Museum, Nairobi, Kenya, first drew my attention to the possible distinctness of the coastal Angolan populations of this sunbird during the course of a visit to the Durban Museum as long ago as October, 1960. This belated study confirms Mr. William's earlier findings.

It seems not to have been recorded in the standard literature that the Dusky Sunbird male assumes an eclipse form of dress during the dry season. Males in this dress resemble females but generally retain some scattered metallic feathers over the upper-parts and lesser wing-coverts. Below, the fore-throat surface is fully metallic, and the medio-ventral plane is dull sooty brown. Full breeding dress is acquired late in the year, from about October onwards, and many males are still in worn, sun-affected breeding dress as late as mid-May.