

Grebe, and, no doubt, were plucked off when the birds preened themselves, and swallowed, possibly, on account of the oil deposited on them. The birds had not quite completed the moult.

[Dr. Jordan brought this exhibit for the previous meeting ; but, owing to his having to leave early, was unable to show it.—ED.]

Mr. W. L. SCLATER exhibited and described three new birds from Amani Forest, in the Usambara District of Tanganyika Territory, recently obtained by Mr. R. E. Moreau :—

***Apalis moreaui*, sp. nov.**

Nearest, perhaps, to *Apalis chirindensis* and *A. alticola* from the Chirinda Forest of S. Rhodesia and from Fife in the highlands between Lakes Nyasa and Tanganyika respectively. It is distinguished from both, however, by its much longer and more slender bill and by its shorter tail, which is composed of eight feathers only in the only three specimens available for examination. These tail-feathers are very narrow and much graduated, the outer pair being about two-thirds the length of the longest. There are no traces of the white tips to the tail characteristic of the other species, but the tails of all three examples are a little worn, and if the tips were present they might have been worn off. The wing is short and rounded, the outer primary being about half the length of the longest, which are the fourth and fifth. The tarsus is long and is covered in front by several transverse shields, while behind it has only one long plate. Finally, there are two short rectal bristles only.

General colour above dusky grey throughout, becoming slightly tinged with rufous-brown on the forehead ; below pale slaty grey, becoming almost white on the throat and abdomen, and with a tinge of brown on the tarsal feathering ; under wing-coverts white, extending to the outer edge of the wing.

Iris pale brown, bill black, becoming whitish at the tip, especially of the lower mandible ; feet pale brown to flesh.



*Measurements*.—Length about 120 mm., weight 8·5 to 9 grm., wing 45 mm., tail 48–51 mm., culmen 15 mm., tarsus 20 mm.

*Type*, a male obtained in forest at 3000 ft. near Amani, in the Usambara District of Tanganyika Territory, on December 14, 1930, marked "Not breeding." Collected by R. E. Moreau. Collector's no. 414. Brit. Mus. Reg. no. 1931.5.7.1.

Three specimens, all males, have been received from Mr. Moreau; the other two both from Amani, and dated December 28, 1930, and January 1, 1931.

I hesitate to create a new genus for this Warbler until the genus *Apalis* has been carefully revised, but I believe that the length of the bill and number of tail-feathers, if confirmed by the examination of additional examples, will certainly entitle it to generic distinction.

It is a little bird of very great interest, and I have much pleasure in attaching to it Mr. Moreau's name, as he has been instrumental in enriching the Museum collection with many rare and novel birds from Amani and its neighbourhood.

### ***Chlorophoneus nigrescens*, sp. nov.**

Above, the crown and shoulder slaty grey, the rest of the upper parts dark green, quite indistinguishable from those of *C. nigrifrons* or *C. rubiginosus*; below, the throat, sides of the face and neck, and the upper chest sooty black, becoming posteriorly gradually replaced by green of much the same shade as the upper parts; under wing-coverts partly green and partly yellow. No trace of the yellow tips to the tail-feathers as in *C. nigrifrons* and *C. rubiginosus*. Iris carmine, bill black; feet greyish, with yellow soles.

*Measurements* of the type and only example:—Length about 190 mm., wing 92 mm., tail 87 mm., tarsus 22 mm., culmen 14 mm.

*Type*, a male with somewhat enlarged testes, was taken in forest near Amani in the Usambara District of Tanganyika Territory on March 19, 1931, by Mr. R. E. Moreau. Collector's no. 709. Brit. Mus. Reg. no. 1931.5.7.4.



Of this exceedingly interesting bird Mr. Moreau writes as follows :—

“ As you know, this is the second time this black-breasted *Chlorophoneus* has been taken at Amani, and several interesting points are raised. We get here *C. nigrifrons* and *C. rubiginosus*, the former the commoner. Both are confined to the heavy Rain-forest, from which the new *Chlorophoneus* came. *C. nigrifrons* and *C. rubiginosus* may be seen feeding in company, and their voices are, to me, indistinguishable.

“ Our *rubiginosus*, *nigrifrons*, and the new one all have identical upper parts, and my collector tells me that the new bird's call is exactly like that of the other species. Further, the new bird, a male, was shot in company with what appears to me to be an ordinary female *nigrifrons* (also sent). (But I do not know how much weight to attach to that, since, as I said, *nigrifrons* and *rubiginosus* have been seen together.) The suggestion obtrudes itself that the new bird may be a melanistic sport of one of the others, probably *nigrifrons*. But, if so, it is surely surprising that two have been got here where so little collecting has been done, and none in Kenya (so far as I know). Further, although the new bird looks like a *nigrifrons*, with the yellow on the underparts substituted by black, yet the yellowish under wing-coverts persist. Moreover, the yellow tail-tips in *nigrifrons* are not replaced by black tail-tips—the new bird shows no tips at all. In fact the new bird resembles *nigrifrons* just as much as they both resemble *rubiginosus*, neither more nor less. The grouping of these three birds is curiously like that of *C. multicolor*, *C. melamprosopus*, and *C. nigrithorax*.

“ It will be interesting to see whether it bears the same relation (in appearance) to *nigrifrons* as *nigrithorax* does to *multicolor*.”

It is very remarkable that three such closely allied forms should be found not only in the same locality, but in company with each other. It seems difficult under our present ideas to regard them as distinct species or subspecies. Whether they can be regarded as examples of mutation, that rather facile explanation so often applied, but so little understood, must remain in doubt for the present. We hope Mr. Moreau,



by his field-observations, may be able to throw further light on this interesting problem.

***Dioptrornis fischeri amani*, subsp. nov.**

Resembling *D. f. fischeri*, but smaller and very much paler; back a silvery slate, rather like a bluish slate, and below also paler, and with no brown tinge. The circle of white plumelets round the eye is about as well developed as in the typical race.

*Measurements*.—Length about 145 mm., wing 80 mm., tail 65 mm., culmen 13 mm., tarsus 12 mm.

The wing of the typical race, which ranges over the greater part of Kenya Colony from Elgon to Kilimanjaro and the northern and dryer part of Kenya Colony, averages 90 mm.

*Type*, a female obtained by R. E. Moreau near Amani in forest at about 1300 ft. and marked "Not breeding." Collector's no. 541. Brit. Mus. Reg. no. 1931.5.7.5.

Only the single example here described has been obtained up to now by Mr. Moreau.

Mr. P. F. BUNYARD exhibited a large series of eggs of the Snow-Bunting (*Plectrophenax nivalis*), from Greenland and Iceland, and made the following remarks:—

In 'The Ibis' for January last, pp. 57-70, there appeared a very interesting and exhaustive article on the various forms of the Snow-Bunting by Finn Salomonsen, in which he states that Schiøler in 1926 ('Dänmarks Fugle,' vol. ii. p. 48) called attention to the fact that the Greenland Snow-Buntings were different to the European, claiming that they were larger than the typical birds from Lapland.

He further stated, however, that Mr. E. M. Nicholson had been unable to confirm this, though he had only a few birds, *i. e.*, three males and four females (Ibis, 1930, p. 296).

Owing to the disagreement on this point between Schiøler and Nicholson, Salomonsen examined a large number of skins, but was unable to succeed in finding any great difference between the Greenland, Iceland, and Scandinavian specimens, except in the plumage.



Sclater, William Lutley. 1931. "Mr. W. L. Sclater exhibited and described three new birds from Amani Forest, in the Usambara District of Tanganyika Territory, recently obtained by Mr. R. E. Moreau." *Bulletin of the British Ornithologists' Club* 51, 109–112.

**View This Item Online:** <https://www.biodiversitylibrary.org/item/125341>

**Permalink:** <https://www.biodiversitylibrary.org/partpdf/146403>

**Holding Institution**

Natural History Museum Library, London

**Sponsored by**

Natural History Museum Library, London

**Copyright & Reuse**

Copyright Status: In copyright. Digitized with the permission of the rights holder.

Rights Holder: British Ornithologists' Club

License: <http://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-nc-sa/4.0/>

Rights: <https://biodiversitylibrary.org/permissions>

This document was created from content at the **Biodiversity Heritage Library**, the world's largest open access digital library for biodiversity literature and archives. Visit BHL at <https://www.biodiversitylibrary.org>.