

appear to differ significantly from Nimba adult specimens of *eisentrauti*. Its gonads were recorded as small. The skull was partially pneumatized and it was probably a bird of the year. Its legs were noted as orange-yellow. The bill was also orange-yellow with some brownish areas. The wing measures 76 mm, tail 45 mm and bill 12 mm.

Six B.M.N.H. specimens of *zenkeri* include a juv ♂ recently fledged, collected by G. L. Bates on 22 March 1906 at Bitye on the River Ja in the Camerouns (B.M.N.H. No. 1911.5.31.137). Its bill was only partially formed and the tail half grown. The plumage is dark greenish above and considerably dusker greyish-green below. Serle remarks that he examined the short series of adult *zenkeri* obtained by Bates now in the B.M.N.H. However, he failed to note the significance of the juvenile in that collection. Had he done so he would have realised that his own much brighter yellow-green (? imm) specimen from Cameroun did not fit the plumage sequence of *zenkeri*. The tail pattern of the juv *zenkeri* is identical to that of the adult and quite different from that of *eisentrauti*. Dr. Serle himself remarked on this difference: "The amount of white on the four outer pairs of rectrices is much greater. The outermost pair are white tipped light brown, the brown tip extending 15 mm along the outer web and 4 mm along the inner web; the next pair are white narrowly edged with brown to 12 mm from the tip along the outer web only; the next pair are entirely white".

*Remarks.* The genus *Melignomon* was long thought to consist of a single species, *M. zenkeri*. With the discovery of *eisentrauti*, a species apparently endemic to the Upper Guinea forest, and as far as is known, *allopatric* with *zenkeri* (see Snow (1978), map 374), it seems probable that the genus consists of 2 species in a single super-species. *M. zenkeri* is found from the southern Camerouns to the northern part of the Congo forest east to Semliki. It seems likely *eisentrauti* will be found in other areas of the Upper Guinea forest.

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*Address:* P. R. Colston, Sub-department of Ornithology, British Museum (Natural History), Tring, Hertfordshire, England.

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## A House x Somali Sparrow *Passer domesticus* x *P. castanopterus* hybrid by J. S. Ash & P. R. Colston

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A bird resembling a ♂ House Sparrow *Passer domesticus* was found by J.S.A. consorting with a small colony of Somali Sparrows *P. castanopterus* on 6 March 1980 in a sea-cave at Hal Hambo (01°54'N, 45°05'E), 31 km south-west of Mogadishu, Somalia. As there were problems concerning its identification it was collected the following day, and identified at the British



Museum of Natural History, Tring, by P.R.C. and Derek Goodwin as a hybrid between these 2 species.

#### FIELD IDENTIFICATION

At first the bird was thought to be *P. domesticus*, as it was clearly very different from the dozen or so *P. castanopterus* present; but closer observation showed that it possessed several puzzling features—notably a poorly defined white wing bar, no white supercilium—merely a pale patch near the base of the bill, and a creamy-yellowish wash on the whitish cheek patches and down the centre of the greyish underparts. From the limited literature available in Somalia it was tentatively identified as *P. d. indicus*, with the possibility, however, that it might be a hybrid. Its grey crown and rump ruled out all races of the Rufous Sparrow *P. iagoensis*, except for *insularis* and *hemileucus*, and these 2 Socotran forms were excluded because they both show a dark line over the ear coverts—a character found throughout the range of *P. iagoensis*.

#### MUSEUM IDENTIFICATIONS

*The hybrid.* The specimen was compared with long series of *Passer* spp. in the British Museum collection, together with a typical ♂ *P. c. castanopterus* collected on 26 June 1979 from the same site as the specimen under review. It was confidently identified beyond reasonable doubt as a *P. domesticus* x *castanopterus* hybrid, for the following reasons: basically it is *P. domesticus* sharing features of *P. castanopterus*, notably the yellowish cheeks; some of the black feathers on the mantle have whiter edges than in *P. domesticus* and are more akin to features shown by *castanopterus*; the normal conspicuous white wing bar of a ♂ *domesticus* is reduced to a narrow white line in the hybrid (*castanopterus* lacks a white wing bar); the rest of the plumage and the size of the specimen agrees with *P. domesticus*.

*Description of hybrid.* The whole of the top of the head from base of bill, grey; a small pale patch (reduced supercilium) near the base of the bill; a narrow chestnut band extending from just in front of and above the eye, over the ear coverts and round the nape; rest of the upperparts with near-black and whitish streaks on a greyish ground colour; rump grey; a black bib, scaly below; near white cheek patches washed with pale yellow; rest of underparts grey, but with pale yellow down the centre; wings chestnut with black streaks on coverts, and a single rather poorly defined whitish wing bar; bill black; tarsi yellowish-brown; wing-length 73 mm; weight 23.7 g; testes partly developed (8 mm). Registration Number: 1979-11-2.

The local ♂ *P. castanopterus* obtained the same day is the eastern, nominate form *P. c. castanopterus*, and is typical in all respects. Wing-length 70 mm; weight 17.8 g; testes partly developed (2 mm). Registration Number: 1979-11-1.

#### POSSIBILITIES OF ORIGIN

The origin of such a specimen clearly must be from somewhere within the present range of *P. castanopterus*, so that a review of the knowledge of this species' distribution in East Africa, and also that of *P. domesticus*, is necessary.

*Distribution of P. castanopterus.* The species' range is confined to the horn of Africa. The eastern, nominate race is common and widespread throughout Somalia and southeastern Ethiopia between 2° and 12°N and east of 41°E. It is the town sparrow of this region, but also has a rural distribution, and is particularly associated with the coast in eastern Somalia. The small colony at Hal Hambo found by J.S.A. is 167 km southwest of the nearest known



*P. castanopterus* colony, at Demodo (02°40'N, 46°14'E), and 206 km southeast of another fringe colony, at Baidoa (03°07'N, 42°38'E).

A western population, separated as *P. c. fulgens*, occurs in southwest Ethiopia in the Lakes Stephanie and Rudolf area and extends into northern Kenya. We can find no evidence to support the statements in Mackworth-Praed & Grant (1960) that it occurs in south central Ethiopia, nor that it is found in south Ethiopia (Urban & Brown 1971). The latter authors' reference to southeast Ethiopia should refer to the nominate form.

*Distribution of P. domesticus.* The House Sparrow is virtually unknown in Somalia and adjoining Ethiopia and Kenya. The reference in Mackworth-Praed & Grant (1960) to *P. d. niloticus* at Berbera (10°26'N, 45°02'E), "where it was probably introduced", presumably refers to the adult ♂ specimen (*niloticus*) in the British Museum collected by Dr. R. E. Drake-Brockman at Berbera on 9 April 1905 (Registration Number: 1905-6-1-9). However, we are unable to trace any report of this species in the literature from this locality, or from anywhere else in Somalia, and in particular it is not alluded to in Hall & Moreau (1970), White (1963) or Archer & Godman (1961).

For Kenya, Mackworth-Praed & Grant state that the House Sparrow *P. d. indicus* "probably now occurs at Mombasa". P. L. Britton (*in litt.* 19.4.80) has very kindly provided a detailed review of the present situation at Mombasa, which appears to be the only Kenya locality for *P. domesticus*. Following the discovery by him of a pair in April 1979, subsequent investigations by several observers revealed a small thriving breeding population; but all the indications were that this seemed to be a fresh introduction (probably by accident from a ship or ships), and that there was no previous evidence that it had ever become established on the East African mainland.

There are no records from Ethiopia.

*Conclusion.* The present hybrid can only have been bred within the range of *P. castanopterus*. It is unlikely that the *P. domesticus* parent involved originated from Mombasa, well outside the range of *P. castanopterus*, especially as all the birds in the small colony at Hal Hambo appear to be typical *castanopterus*. Berbera, as another possible source, and within the range of *P. castanopterus*, is over 1000 km away and there is no evidence that *P. domesticus* is there now. We must conclude therefore that the hybrid has arisen from a pairing between these two *Passer* species at an undiscovered site in Somalia, probably not too far distant from Hal Hambo, almost certainly involving a House Sparrow which arrived by a ship-assisted passage within the range of the Somali Sparrow.

To the best of our knowledge this is the only known occurrence of a *Passer domesticus* x *castanopterus* hybrid. Hybrid *P. domesticus* x *montanus* are not uncommon (Rooke 1957, Richardson 1957).

*Acknowledgements:* We thank Derek Goodwin for his help in the identification of specimens, and Peter Britton for his valuable notes on the status of *Passer domesticus* in Kenya.

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- Addresses:* Dr. J. S. Ash, Division of Birds, National Museum of Natural History, Smithsonian Institution, Washington, D.C. 20560, U.S.A.  
P. R. Colston, British Museum (Natural History), Sub-Department of Ornithology, Tring, Hertfordshire, HP23 6AP, England.
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## New subspecies of *Pipreola riefferii* and *Chlorospingus ophthalmicus* from Peru

by John P. O'Neill & Theodore A. Parker III

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Studies in Peru by members of the Louisiana State University Museum of Zoology and their associates have turned up a rather astounding number of new forms of birds. Series of the cotinga *Pipreola riefferii* from the Carpish and Sira Mountains of central Peru are quite distinct and we propose to call them

### ***Pipreola riefferii tallmanorum* subsp. nov.**

*Type:* Adult male, collected on 5 August 1973 by Erika J. Tallman on the trail to Hacienda Paty below (NE) Carpish Pass, Department of Huánuco, Peru, elevation c. 2200 m, No. 74145, Louisiana State University Museum of Zoology. (Dan A. Tallman original number 1734.)

*Description:* The male differs from males of all other subspecies in its combination of small size, shiny black head and throat and nearly unmarked lemon yellow lower breast and belly. Females differ from females of all other subspecies in their small size, the slightly darker (more bluish) green upperparts, and the slightly more golden yellow of the underparts.

*Measurement of type (mm):* Wing (chord) 85.2, tail 68.6, tarsus 19.5, culmen from base 13.9.

*Range:* So far as known, the upper Subtropical and lower Temperate Zones of the eastern slope of the Cordillera Carpish and the Subtropical Zone of the Cerros de Sira, both in the Department of Huánuco, central Peru.

*Specimens examined:* *Pipreola r. riefferii* (7). Colombia: "Bogota," 1 ♂ subad. (AMNH); "Columbia," 2 ♂♂ (AMNH); Subia, 1 ♂ (AMNH); El Roble, 1 ♀ (AMNH); parte alta de Fusugasuga, 1 ♀ (AMNH); El Eden, 1 ♂ (AMNH).

*P. r. occidentalis* (4). Colombia: Ricaurte, 1 ♂ (LSUMZ); Cerro Munchique, 2 ♀♀ (LSUMZ); Moscopan, 1 ♂ (LSUMZ).

*P. r. chachapoyas* (incl. *confusa*) (33). Peru: ridge E (above) San José de Lourdes, 2 ♂♂, 2 ♀♀ (LSUMZ); 20 trail km E La Peca, 4 ♂♂, 1 ♀ (= ♂?), 2 ♀♀ (LSUMZ); 12 trail km E La Peca, 1 ♀ (LSUMZ); Cordillera Colán, 1 ♀ (LSUMZ); 33 rd. km NE Ingenio, 2 ♂♂ (LSUMZ); 10 rd. km NE Abra Patricia, 4 ♂♂, 3 ♀♀ (LSUMZ); Chachapoyas, 1 ♂ (AMNH); La Lejia, 1 ♂, 1 ♀ (AMNH); San Pedro, 2 ♂♂, 1 ♀ (AMNH); Cumpang, 5 ♂♂ (LSUMZ).



Ash, J. S. and Colston, Peter. 1981. "A HOUSE X SOMALI SPARROW PASSER-DOMESTICUS X PASSER-CASTANOPTERUS HYBRID." *Bulletin of the British Ornithologists' Club* 101, 291–294.

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