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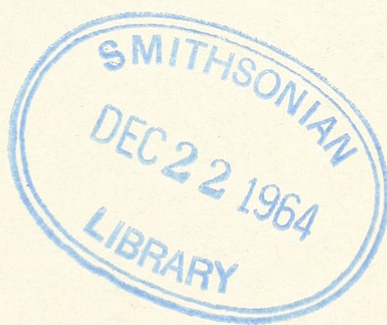
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A NEW SWIFT FROM MT. MOROTO, UGANDA

By HERBERT FRIEDMANN



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By HERBERT FRIEDMANN²

ABSTRACT. A new race of *Apus pallidus* from Mt. Moroto, northeastern Uganda, is described and named *A. p. kapnodes*. The relationships of *A. niansae* with the *A. pallidus* group are discussed with the conclusion that until fuller data are available the two should be treated as species.

Among a collection of over 4,000 birds from Kenya and Uganda brought back by the Knudsen-Machris 1963 expedition of the Los Angeles County Museum are eleven specimens of a swift from Mt. Moroto, which prove to represent a hitherto unknown race. The expedition had as its primary objectives the collecting of a group of elephants, of chimpanzees, and other large mammals for the Museum's exhibition galleries, but made large collections of other animals as well. In anticipation of a complete report on the entire, very extensive collection, this bird is described and named at this time.

Apus pallidus kapnodes, NEW SUBSPECIES

Type: adult male, collected on Mt. Moroto, Uganda, at an altitude of 8,500 feet, May 13, 1963, Los Angeles County Museum no. 39899, by the Knudsen-Machris Expedition. The subspecific name is a Greek adjective signifying dark color.

Characters: similar to *A. pallidus somalicus* (Clarke), but much darker above and below, and larger. The head and body, except for the whitish chin and throat are Chaetura Black in *kapnodes*, as compared with Hair Brown in four examples of topotypical *somalicus* from former British Somaliland. (Capitalized color terms are those of Ridgway, 1912.) The wing length of the present series of *kapnodes* measures from 151 to 158 mm. (average 154.2 mm.) in eight males, 151 to 160 mm. (average 156 mm.) in three females; in *somalicus* the wing length of two males is 145 and 148 mm., of two females 147 and 153 mm. In the original description of *somalicus* the wing length was given as 152-156 mm., but the four specimens examined, including one from Bihendula, the type locality, are much smaller. The colors of the soft parts of *kapnodes* were recorded on the labels as: iris dark brown, bill black, feet purplish gray.

In his study of the relations of all the species of the genus *Apus*, Lack (1956:55) mentioned a specimen of a dark form of *pallidus* from Maroto

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(= Moroto), Uganda, taken in January, and one from British Somaliland in June, as being darker than *pallidus*, a little darker than *brehmorum*, but not quite so dark as one example of *illyricus*. The mention of a dark bird from British Somaliland, the home of typical *somalicus*, raises a question as to the extent of individual variation in that race, but the four specimens from there seen in the present study are so uniformly paler than the Moroto birds that the distinctness of the latter population seems well established.

There is one as yet unresolved problem to be discussed, namely the relationships of *niansae* with the *pallidus* group. Chapin (1939:455f.) considered *somalicus* a synonym of *niansae*, but his conclusions have not been generally followed by subsequent students of these birds. Three specimens of *niansae* have been available to me in the present study, and they are distinct from both *kapnodes* and *somalicus* in being larger, with wings over 170 mm. in length. In color they are close to *kapnodes*, but even slightly darker on the underparts, especially the under wing coverts. White (1953:77) advocated considering *Apus somalicus* a race of *niansae*, and not of *pallidus*, but it is not wholly clear that the two are completely allopatric in their breeding areas, so they are here kept as different species. More recently Lack (1956:54) supported White's decision that *niansae* and *somalicus* were conspecific, but concluded that there were two reasonable ways of treating the evidence, one being to treat *somalicus* and *niansae* as races of *pallidus*, and the other to consider *niansae* and *somalicus* a species apart from *pallidus*. Inasmuch as he had insufficient data to make a firm decision, Lack listed them as *A. pallidus* ? *niansae*, and *A. pallidus* ? *somalicus*. It would seem that eventually, when our knowledge of their respective allopatry or sympatry is more definite, it may be possible to determine if they are one specific group, but until then it is better to be conservative and to keep *niansae* as a species characterized chiefly by its larger size.

Range: Known only from Mt. Moroto, northeastern Uganda, between 5,000 and 8,500 feet. Mackworth-Praed and Grant (1957:780f.) give the range of *somalicus* as British Somaliland to central Kenya, without mention of actual Kenyan localities. They do not mention Uganda at all, so Mt. Moroto would appear to be a western extension of range for the species. In neither his 1922 nor his 1932 paper did van Someren record the species, and it is also absent from Jackson's 1938 work on the birds of Kenya and Uganda. Meinertzhagen (1937:756) collected one specimen at Nanyuki, Kenya, which is the only Kenya record I have been able to find. If there are other examples known from northern and central Kenya they should be examined as they may turn out to be *kapnodes* and not typical *somalicus*, or even more probably, *niansae*.

For the loan of comparative material of *somalicus* from British Somaliland, I am indebted to the American Museum of Natural History.



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