

PROCEEDINGS
OF THE
BIOLOGICAL SOCIETY OF WASHINGTONNEW BIRDS FROM NEPAL AND
THE INDIAN REGION

BY S. DILLON RIPLEY

During 1947 and again in 1948-49 I was privileged to be able to collect birds and mammals in Nepal as a guest of the Government of that Country and with the special permission of the Ruling Prime Ministers, their Highnesses Maharajah Sir Padma Shamsher Jang Bahadur Rana, who resigned in 1948, and his successor, Maharajah Sir Mohun Shamsher Jang Bahadur Rana. The first trip was sponsored by the Smithsonian Institution and Yale University, the second by the National Geographic Society, Yale and the Smithsonian. The following new forms are described as a preliminary report on the collections of birds made in Nepal. A comprehensive report on the birds encountered will be published at a later date in the Journal of the Bombay Natural History Society. I should like to express my gratitude at this time to the authorities of the three Societies and Institutions which supported this field work, and also my very warm thanks to the Prime Ministers of Nepal and their Government for permission to work in areas hitherto closed to all foreigners.

Hemiprocne longipennis dryas, subsp. nov.

Type:—♂ ad. (U.S.N.M. No. 389369), collected March 25, 1946, by Salim Ali at Juna, Rajpipla, south Gujarat.

Diagnosis:—from *coronata* this race differs by being conspicuously paler gray above and paler on the lower throat and abdomen. In the male the chestnut patch on the sides of the face and chin is paler than in birds from the rest of India, Ceylon and eastwards to Siam.

In size, the two specimens available of this race measure: wing ♂ 148, ♀ 154; tail ♂ 110, ♀ 121. A series from eastern and southern India measure: wing ♂ ♂ and ♀ ♀ 146.5-160.

Range:—southern Gujarat, possibly into the Dangs.

Remarks:—this species is uncommon in the western less well-wooded parts of India and has not been recorded from Rajputana or from west of Indore. I am most grateful to the authorities of the U. S. National Museum for allowing me to utilize this material, and to Mr. H. G. Deignan for attracting my attention to this form.

Megalaima zeylanica rana, subsp. nov.

Type:—♂ ad. (U.S.N.M. No. 408263), collected January 2, 1949, by S. Dillon Ripley at Bajora, Dailekh District, western Nepal.

Diagnosis:—from *hodgsoni* this race differs by being larger and darker, more brownish, particularly on the breast. The type and one other male measure:

	wing	tail	culmen
Bajora, 2 ♂ ♂	140.5, 141	87, 87.5	34, 37
Nepal, Sikkim, Assam			
19 ♂ ♂ and ♀ ♀	120–137 (129.9)	78–83.5	30–36 (33.2)

Range:—Terai and foothills of extreme western Nepal.

Remarks:—as the type locality of *Megalaima hodgsoni* Bonaparte (Consp. Gen. Avium, I, 1850, p. 144), is simply Nepal, I hereby restrict it to Simra in the Terai of central Nepal which is on the route from India to Katmandu, and which consequently forms a likely spot for the original type to have been collected. This new subspecies as well as *hodgsoni* belongs to the *lineata* subgroup within the species *zeylanica*, a subgroup characterized by having the space between the eye and bill feathered.

In the Terai less than twenty miles to the south of Bajora which is in the "duns," the inner valley behind the first range of hills, we found *caniceps* occurring, a race of the *zeylanica* subgroup of the species, a subgroup in which the skin between the eye and bill is bare. Formerly of course these forms were listed as separate species on this character alone, but I believe combining them into one species is justifiable as the forms replace each other and are presumably interfertile.

Like so many Himalayan species, the populations tend to move down and reside at lower altitudes from west to east. In the western Himalayas *M. zeylanica caniceps* is found. I cannot recognize the size race *kangrae* Whistler which belongs to the naked-faced *zeylanica* subgroup according to Mr. Usher of the British Museum staff who has kindly examined the type for me. This form extends as far east in the hills as Kumaon. It may breed up to 4,000 feet and descends from there uniformly to the Plains. East of Kumaon it is found only in the Terai, gradually straggling southwards, so that finally in the eastern Nepal Terai it occurs only on the southern border of the Country, more properly in Bihar Province of India. The race *rana* of the *lineatus* subgroup then replaces *caniceps* in the western Nepal foothills. Then ranging farther east, *hodgsoni* descends finally from the foothills of central Nepal and is found in the Terai areas of eastern Nepal, Sikkim and Assam.

It gives me great pleasure to dedicate this new subspecies to the Rana family, the family of the Prime Ministers of Nepal, who have made and shaped the destiny of that Country for over one hundred years.

***Dinopium shorii anguste*, subsp. nov.**

Type.—♂ ad. (U. S. Nat. Mus. Coll. No. 377546), collected March 12, 1945 by K. E. Stager six miles north of Myitkina, N. Burma.

Diagnosis.—from *shorii* from the United Provinces, Nepal and Sikkim, this race differs in the male by the considerable reduction of the scarlet wash found over the golden back. In Burma specimens this reddish wash is confined to the lower back and rump. In the female this race differs by much smaller narrower white shafts on the crown and nape. While difficult to measure, in Burma females this white streak is not much over 1 millimeter in width, while in Indian examples it is in the

neighborhood of 2 mm. In these rather narrowish lanceolate feathers which tend to be about $3\frac{1}{2}$ mm. wide, such a difference is at once clearly apparent. There is no difference in size between these populations.

Range.—Burma from the Chin, Kachin Hills and Arakan Hills south to Thayetmyo. I have not examined northern Assam specimens. Presumably those west of the Brahmaputra fit in with *shorii*. If this species occurs in the Mishmi and Patkoi Hills it is probably the Burma form.

***Mulleripicus pulverulentus mohun*, subsp. nov.**

Type.—♂ ad. (U. S. Nat. Mus. Coll. No. 408175), collected December 24, 1948 by S. Dillon Ripley at Jamu Ghat on the Bheri River, western Nepal.

Diagnosis.—from *harteri* of Assam, Burma, Siam and Indochina, this subspecies differs by darker grey coloration both above and particularly on the lower parts. Also the malar stripe is duller and deeper, more vermilion than scarlet. There is no difference in size.

Range.—The Terai and the foothills from the United Provinces through Nepal to Assam. Birds from North Cachar in Assam are *harterti*. No specimens have been examined from north and west of the Brahmaputra.

Remarks.—This magnificent Woodpecker is rare in collections from India and Nepal. The National Geographic Society-Yale University-Smithsonian Institution Expedition found it only in the heavily forested "duns," the valleys behind the first range of hills spreading north from the Terai. In western Nepal the forest in this region was primary and untouched, composed of tremendous "sal" trees (*Shorea robusta*) for the most part.

It gives me great pleasure to name this subspecies in honor of the Prime Minister-Ruler of Nepal who did so much to make our Expedition a success, His Highness Maharajah Mohun Shamsheer Jang Bahadur Rana, G.C.I.E., G.B.E.

***Garrulax striatus vibex*, subsp. nov.**

Type.—♀ ad. (U.S.N.M. No. 391175), collected April 29, 1947, by S. Dillon Ripley at Godavari, Central Valley, Nepal.

Diagnosis.—from *striatus* this race differs by smaller size and generally darker more olive-tinted upper surface and flanks. The dark edging to the median white streak, particularly on the back feathers, is darker than the similar streak in *striatus*. From *sikkimensis*, this race differs by being distinctly lighter, less red-brown, particularly on the back and lower parts, the dark edging to the median streaks noticeably darker.

Measurements.—Central Nepal birds measure: wing 138-150.5, tail 130.5-138, culmen 25.5-27, west Himalayan *striatus* measures: wing 153-165, tail 139-148, culmen 26.5-28, while Sikkim and east Nepal *sikkimensis* measures: wing 140-146, tail 129-137, culmen 26-27.

Remarks.—Sharpe (Cat. Bds. Brit. Mus. 7, 1883, p. 451) quotes Scully as saying that the Nepal specimens of this species are darker than examples from the Himalayas further to the west. Ticehurst (B.B.C.C. 44, 1924, p. 104) in describing *sikkimensis* from Sikkim notes that Nepal birds are intermediate between his race and *striata* from the Punjab and U. P. Himalayas. The collection of specimens from east Nepal which

can be placed with *sikkimensis*, and yet are distinctly darker than birds from the central valley, prompts me to describe this new race which unhappily does not fit into the adjacent populations to the west or east.

Range:—central and western Nepal in the hills from 3,500 to 9,000 feet.

Garrulax rufogularis grosvenori, subsp. nov.

Type:—♂ ad. (U.S.N.M. No. 408533), collected December 28, 1948, by S. Dillon Ripley at Rekcha, Dailekh District, western Nepal.

Diagnosis:—from *rufogularis* of Sikkim and central Nepal, this race differs by having narrower, less prominent terminal bars on the upper surface, and by being much lighter, less rufous in color. The ear coverts are rusty and only bordered with black and white. On the lower surface the black and white moustachial streaks are more prominent, while the terminal spots on the breast and abdomen are reduced.

From *occidentalis* of the western Himalayas this race differs by being somewhat more olivaceous on the upper surface with larger terminal spots both above and below. In the type and one other specimen of *occidentalis* examined, the black mixed with whitish feathers of the moustachial area come close together at the base of the throat in the form of a shield separating the chestnut and white of the throat from the pale grayish of the upper breast. In *grosvenori*, the moustachial streaks are only streaks, although they are more prominent than in *rufogularis*. *Occidentalis* is probably slightly larger than *grosvenori*. The two specimens examined have wing measurements of 93 and 96, tail 107, culmen 22.5, in contrast to *grosvenori* which measures: wing 84-94, tail 99-106, culmen 20-22.5.

Range:—hills of western Nepal.

Remarks:—the type locality of *rufogularis* Gould is listed by Baker (Fauna British India: Birds, I, 1922, p. 158.) as Sikkim. I hereby fix the type of *Cinclosoma rufimenta* Hodgson (Asiatic Researches, 19, 1836, p. 148) as Katmandu, as in this paper (i.e. p. 145) he mentions that these species occur in the Minister's garden there. Birds from the Central Valley appear to agree with Sikkim *rufogularis*, so that *rufimenta* is a synonym of that form.

The type of this striking Laughing Thrush is illustrated on p. 40 of the National Geographic Magazine (vol. 97, Jan., 1950), and it gives me great pleasure to name it in honor of Dr. Gilbert Grosvenor, President of the National Geographic Society, whose personal interest was so largely responsible for making possible the recent National Geographic Society-Yale University-Smithsonian Institution Expedition to Nepal.

Actinodura nipalensis vinctura, subsp. nov.

Type:—♀ ad. (U.S.N.M. No. 408570), collected February 1, 1949 by S. Dillon Ripley at Mangalbaré, Dhankuta District, east Nepal.

Diagnosis:—from *nipalensis* Hodgson (which I hereby restrict to slopes of Katmandu Valley, central Nepal) this race differs by having a deeper black band on the terminal upper surface of the tail, and noticeably heavier black barring on wings and tail. On the central rectrices of *vinctura* the terminal band measures from 28-32 mm., while in birds from the central valley the black band is absent or reduced to a narrow shading extending to about 15 mm. in depth. The black band

on wings and tail measures 2 or more millimeters in width, while in *nipalensis* these bands are of the order of 1 millimeter or less.

From *daflaensis*, *waldeni* and *poliotis* this race differs in having the chin, throat and breast unstreaked as does *nipalensis*.

Range:—eastern Nepal, probably east of the Arun Kosi River, Sikkim and Bhutan.

***Phylloscopus subaffinis arcanus*, subsp. nov.**

Type:—♀ ad. (U.S.N.M. No. 408868), collected January 7, 1949, by S. Dillon Ripley at Tikapur, Kailali District, western Nepal.

Diagnosis:—from *subaffinis* (Ogilvie-Grant) this race may be distinguished by having the upper parts more olive, less olive-brown, by having the supercilium and the center of the underparts more straw yellow, not mustard or amber yellow, and by having the flanks wax yellow, approaching clay color, rather than fulvous. In all respects this is a paler, more washed-out bird than true *subaffinis*. In addition *arcanus* differs from the typical form in having a longer bill, and, apparently, a longer tail, actually and proportionally.

Measurements:—Sixteen specimens of *subaffinis* from Szechuan, Hupeh and northern Thailand when compared with three females of *arcanus* taken in Nepal, measure as follows:

	wing		tail-wing index	bill (from skull)
<i>subaffinis</i> ♂ ♂ and ♀ ♀	48.5-55	43.5-50	80-96%	9-11 (ave. 9.2)
<i>arcanus</i> ♀ ♀	52-55	51.5-54	93-103%	12-13 mm.

Range:—My three wintering specimens were secured at Tikapur in January and on Naggerjung, a hill in the Central Valley of Katmandu in April, 1947. As a wintering bird this extends the previously known range of the species seven hundred fifty miles to the west from Myitkina district in north Burma, the westernmost locality for *subaffinis*, *fide* Ticehurst (A Systematic Review of the Genus *Phylloscopus*, London 1938, p. 76). The breeding range of *arcanus* is a mystery. The species was not encountered in South-eastern Tibet by Ludlow (Ibis, 1944, p. 197-198). In the same author's article on the Birds of Lhasa (Ibis, 1950, p. 39), he mentions a very dark Willow Warbler as passing through the city in the autumn. This is a possibility, if *arcanus* should prove to be a breeding bird in northern Sikang or western Kansu.

Remarks:—The discovery of a race of *Phylloscopus subaffinis* wintering in Nepal further complicates the arrangement of this species which is so close to *P. affinis*, the more western breeding species. It becomes more than ever interesting to attempt to solve the breeding biology of these two species which apparently meet on the same ground, but may be ecologically separated, in northern Yunnan and southwestern Szechuan. Unfortunately this area, which is such a biological "heartland" seems to continue to be inaccessible to all but non-regimented winter and breeding migrants.

I am most grateful to Mr. H. G. Deignan for his cordial cooperation and assistance in the discovery and diagnosis of this new form, and for the loan of material from the National Museum.

***Phylloscopus maculipennis centralis*, subsp. nov.**

Type:—♀ ad. (U.S.N.M. No. 408864), collected December 28, 1948 by S. Dillon Ripley at Rekcha, Dailekh District, western Nepal.

Diagnosis:—from *maculipennis* Blyth (restricted as to type locality by me to Ilam District, eastern Nepal) this form differs by being lighter, more yellowish-olive on the upper parts and the crown a lighter shade of iron-gray, and paler yellow below. From *virens* Ticehurst of the Punjab Himalayas, this race differs by being darker, more olive on the back, less yellowish-olive, and by being darker, more fuscous on the crown.

Range:—western and central Nepal. Specimens have been examined from Dailekh District and the central valley of Katmandu.

***Certhia himalayana infima*, subsp. nov.**

Type.—♂ ad. (U.S.N.M. No. 408480), collected January 6, 1949, by S. Dillon Ripley at Tikapur, Kailali District, western Nepal.

Diagnosis:—from *himalayana* this race differs by being conspicuously darker, more blackish on the upper surface. This race has sharply defined narrow streaks of buffy white on the head, nape and upper back, more distinct and in greater contrast to the background color than in the nominate form. The rufous color on the tips of the feathers of the lower back is stronger and darker than in *himalayana*. On the tail also the barring is more blackish as well as stronger and more distinct. There is no size difference.

Range:—western Nepal in the Karnali River drainage. Winters in the adjacent Terai.

Remarks:—as with other eastern populations of west Himalayan species, this form apparently descends lower than its western relatives. Stuart Baker (*Fauna Brit. India: Birds*, I, 1922, p. 430), speaks of this species in the Simla area as descending to 4,000 feet in winter and breeding at 10,000 feet. In western Nepal this form was encountered wintering in the Terai at less than 1,000 feet altitude.

Kinnear (*Ibis*, 1937, p. 251) states that *himalayana* is not found in Nepal. Actually it is of course a western Himalayan species, and if the two specimens listed from Nepal in the Hodgson collection (*Cat. Birds Brit. Mus. VIII*, 1883, p. 328) are in fact an error, then these specimens constitute the first record for this species in Nepal.



1950. "New birds from Nepal and the Indian region." *Proceedings of the Biological Society of Washington* 63, 101–106.

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