

♀♀ Wing; *strictus* (Java): 141, 142, 142, 145, 145, 146; *kangeanensis*: 142;

Tail; *strictus* (Java): 79, 84, 84, 85, 85, 86; *kangeanensis*: 86;

Culmen; *strictus* (Java): 36.50, 37, 39, 39, 39.50; *kangeanensis*: 36.10.

Max., min. and average measurements:

	<i>strictus</i> :	<i>kangeanensis</i> :
Wing:	141–146	142
	<hr/> 143.50	
Tail:	79–86	86
	<hr/> 83.83	
Culmen:	36.5–39.5	36.10
	<hr/> 38.20	

References:

¹ Hartert, Ernst. The Birds of Kangean Islands, *Nov. Zoöl.*, 9, 1902, p. 434/5.

² Vorderman, A. G. Bijdrage tot de kennis der vogels van den Kangean-Archipel, *Natuurk. Tijdschrift Ned. Indië*, 52, 1893, p. 185/6.

On the geographical variation of the Wattle-eye Flycatcher *Platysteira peltata* (Sundevall)

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This attractive flycatcher ranges from Uganda, Kenya Colony and Tanganyika, west to the southern Congo, Angola and Northern Rhodesia, and south to Nyasaland, Moçambique, eastern Southern Rhodesia, Zululand and Natal.

The number of geographic races recognised within the species varies according to the authority. Sclater (1930) admits three: *P. p. peltata* (Sundevall), 1850: Umlalazi River, Zululand; *P. p. jacksoni* Sharpe, 1891: Sotik, Kenya and *P. p. mentalis* (Bocage), 1878: Caconda, Angola, whereas Mackworth-Praed & Grant (1955), and Benson & White (1957) admit only *P. p. peltata* and *P. p. mentalis*, placing *P. p. jacksoni* as a synonym of *P. p. mentalis*.

Chapin (1953) admits as valid races *P. p. peltata*, *P. p. mentalis* and *P. p. brevipennis* Grote, 1928: Magogoni, on the Rufu River, (inland from Dar-es-Salaam), Tanganyika, and regards *P. p. jacksoni* as a synonym of *P. p. mentalis*. Sclater (1930) places *P. cryptoleuca* Oberholser, 1905: Useri River, near Kilimanjaro, and *P. p. brevipennis* as synonyms of *P. p. peltata*.

As a result of a recent reassessment of the geographical variation exhibited in *Platysteira peltata*, conducted at the Durban Museum, it became apparent that at least three races must be recognised in our formal grouping of the populations into subspecific taxa.

From Natal, Zululand, north through coastal Moçambique as far

north as the lower Zambesi River valley and into the lowlands of southern Nyasaland; also in the lowlands of eastern Southern Rhodesia there occurs *P. p. peltata*. This is a small-sized race which has the black head, wings, tail and breast-band (in the male), or throat and upper breast (in the female) washed with metallic green. The mantle is dark grey, with a wash of non-metallic green.

A further race, the name of which is discussed below, ranges through the eastern Southern Rhodesia highlands, north of *P. p. peltata*, inland Moçambique (above 200 metres), Nyasaland, northern Moçambique, north of the Zambesi River valley through eastern Tanganyika to eastern (coastal) Kenya Colony and southern Somalia; also in the south in the upper Zambesi River valley and eastern Northern Rhodesia. It differs from the nominate race in having the mantle black, with a strong glossy metallic green wash. This diagnostic character is very well marked in the males, but less so in the females.

The third race is *P. p. mentalis*, which ranges from Angola through the southern Congo, Northern Rhodesia west of the Muchinga Range, southern, western and central Tanganyika in the highlands, west of Mt. Kilimanjaro to the Kenya highlands and Uganda. It differs from the other two races in having a metallic blue gloss to the feathers, not green, and is larger in size.

On the question of a name for the populations of eastern Southern Rhodesia, inland regions of Moçambique, Nyasaland, eastern Northern Rhodesia, eastern Tanganyika and eastern Kenya and southern Somalia the name *Platystira cryptoleuca* Oberholser, Useri River, near Kilimanjaro, Tanganyika is available, *P. p. brevipennis* Grote being a synonym. *P. p. jacksoni* Sharpe falls within the established range of *P. p. mentalis*, with which it is placed as a synonym following Chapin (1953).

Arising from this research it is considered that *Platysteira peltata* can be divided into three racial taxa, the nomenclature, characters and ranges of which are detailed hereunder:

Platysteira peltata peltata (Sundevall)

Platystira peltata Sundevall, Oefv. K. Sv. Vet. Akad. Forhandl., Stockholm, vol. 7, 1850, p. 105: "Caffraria inferiore" = Natal.

Type: from Umlalazi River, Zululand.

Black head, wings, tail and breast band (in male), or throat and upper chest (in female), washed with metallic green. Mantle dark grey, with a wash of non-metallic green. Small sized.

Measurements: 10 ♂♂, wing 64.0–68.5 (65.9), tail 51.5–56.5 (53.5), culmen 16.5–18.0 (17.5); 10 ♀♀, wing 62.0–68.0 (65.0), tail 49.0–55.0 (53.0), culmen 15.0–17.0 (16.5) mm.

Material: 35 (Moçambique 11, south-eastern Southern Rhodesia 18, Nyasaland 6).

Range: Natal below 1,500 feet from just south of Durban, to the coastal districts of Zululand, thence through the lowlands of Moçambique as far north as the lower Zambesi River valley and in the lowlands of southern Nyasaland and south-eastern Southern Rhodesia.

Platysteira peltata cryptoleuca (Oberholser)

Platystira cryptoleuca Oberholser, *Proc. U.S. Nat. Mus.*, vol. 29, 1905, p. 913: Useri River, near Kilimanjaro, Tanganyika.

Differs from *P. p. peltata* in having the mantle darker and blacker, strongly overlaid with glossy metallic green. Similar in size to the nominate race.

Measurements: 10 ♂♂, wing 64.0–68.0 (66.2), tail 52.5–56.5 (54.1), culmen 17.0–18.0 (17.5); 10 ♀♀, wing 64.0–67.0 (65.5), tail 52.0–55.5 (53.2), culmen 16.5–17.5 (17.3) mm.

Material: 36 (eastern Southern Rhodesia 12, Moçambique 7, Nyasaland 2, Northern Rhodesia 1, Tanganyika 12, Kenya Colony 2).

Range: The highlands of eastern Southern Rhodesia, north through the inland regions of southern Moçambique above c. 200 metres, to Nyasaland (except southern lowlands), west along the Zambesi River valley as far as Chirundu, and extending to eastern Northern Rhodesia, eastern Tanganyika, eastern Kenya (east of the Rift Valley) and southern Somalia.

Remarks: *P. p. brevipennis* Grote, *Anz. Orn. Ges. Bay.*, vol. 1, No. 12, 1928, p. 195: Magogoni, Rufu River, Tanganyika, is a synonym.

Platysteira peltata mentalis (Bocage)

Platystira mentalis Bocage, *Jorn. Lisboa*, 6, 1878, p. 256: Caconda, Angola.

Differs from *P. p. peltata* and *P. p. cryptoleuca* in having a metallic blue, not green, gloss to the feathers. Similar to *P. p. cryptoleuca* in having the mantle dark, not grey as in the nominate race, but differs as stated above. Larger than the other races.

Measurements: 10 ♂♂, wing 70.0–71.5 (70.6), tail 54.0–58.0 (55.7), culmen 16.5–18.5 (17.5); 10 ♀♀, wing 68.0–71.5 (69.9), tail 54.0–59.5 (55.5), culmen 16.5–19.0 (17.2) mm.

Material: 57 (Northern Rhodesia 52, Kenya Colony 5).

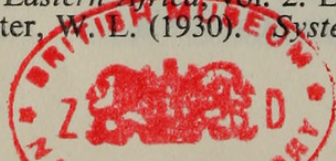
Range: From Angola through the southern Congo and Northern Rhodesia west of the Muchinga Range, to southern, western and central Tanganyika in the highlands west of Mt. Kilimanjaro, the Kenya highlands and Uganda.

Remarks: *P. p. jacksoni* Sharpe, *Ibis*, 1891, p. 445: Sotik, western Kenya is a synonym.

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