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Three New Subspecies of Birds from Africa

BY DEAN AMADON

RIPARIA CINCTA

The previously recognized races of this sand martin are the following:

1. *Riparia cincta cincta* (Boddaert), type locality Cape of Good Hope. This form is of medium size and is pale in color. The wing length in 12 specimens, mostly from Angola but with two from South Africa and one from Nyasaland, varies from 125 to 135 mm. Chapin (1953, Birds of the Belgian Congo, pt. 3, p. 738) gives the wing variation as 126 to 133 mm. The range of the nominate race extends from South Africa north to the latitude of Angola and Nyasaland (a very pale specimen from Lu-chenza, without date, possibly a migrant). This race apparently migrates through West Africa even as far as the grasslands north of the Equator, in Upper Guinea. Bates (1930, Handbook of the birds of West Africa, p. 312) gives the measurements of three males from Nigeria and the Cameroons as 127 to 133 mm. The species has been recorded on Principe Island in the Gulf of Guinea, where it was probably also a migrant from South Africa. But the five specimens I have seen from tropical West Africa and the Belgian Congo all belong to the smaller race described below. In East Africa occasional migrants of nominate *cincta* might be overlooked as pale variants of the resident *suaehelica*. Chapin has recorded two migrants of *cincta* from the Kasai, southeast Belgian Congo, and, as just noted, a specimen from Nyasaland may have been a migrant. I doubt whether *cincta* gets much farther north in the east, as a series of 18 birds from East Africa seems to be composed entirely of bona fide *suaehelica*.

2. *Riparia cincta suaehelica* van Someren, type locality Escarpment, Kenya Colony. This race is, so far as I can judge, identical with *R. c. cincta* in size but is more heavily pigmented throughout (except in white areas). Wing lengths in 14 adult specimens range from 124 to 132 mm. Chapin (*loc. cit.*) gives 120–134 mm., but I suspect that in birds in good feather, even the slightly smaller females will measure somewhat more

than the lower figure he mentions. This form is resident in East Africa (portions of Kenya, Tanganyika, Uganda, and the western border of the Belgian Congo).

3. *Riparia cincta erlangeri* Reichenow, type locality Ethiopia. This race is much like nominate *cincta* in color but is larger than any of the other subspecies. The band on the breast seems to be narrower. I measure wing length in eight skins as 133–142 mm.; Chapin gives 135–146 mm. The range is Ethiopia.

As Chapin (*loc. cit.*) has pointed out, not all the martins of this species from the savannas of the Belgian Congo and French Congo (and, one may probably add, tropical West Africa in general) are migrants of nominate *cincta*. Some of them are residents, and these latter are perceptibly smaller than the birds comprising any of the other three races, all of which frequent areas of higher altitude and (with the exception of *suahelica*) higher latitude also. This hitherto undescribed population I suggest may be called

Riparia cincta parvula, new subspecies

TYPE: A.M.N.H. No. 258470, adult female, August 14, 1923, Lulua-bourg, Kasai, Belgian Congo. Collected by the Mission of St. Joseph; Rev. R. Callewaert. Wing, 119 mm.; tail, 57 mm. (longest feathers).

DIAGNOSIS: Smaller than any of the other three races of the species. In color, the five examined specimens of *parvula* are somewhat variable; some of this variation may be geographical (see below). In general they seem a little paler than *suahelica* but a little darker than *cincta* or *erlangeri*, nearer the latter two.

RANGE: Found in the savannas of the southern Belgian Congo (Kasai, Stanley Pool) and southern French Equatorial Africa (Point Noire). Chapin believes that this small race certainly breeds in this region south of the Equator. North of the Equator *parvula* was collected by Bates in the savannas of the Cameroons and of Nigeria. I have examined one of his specimens taken at Tibati, Cameroons, in the month of October. Chapin writes me that he doubts whether the birds of the southern savannas migrate at all, but that it is still unknown whether those of the northern savannas are resident. If, however, Chapin is correct in believing that the southern examples of *parvula* are non-migratory, it seems likely that those of the northern savannas are also residents. Chapin did not find this martin in the savannas of the northeastern Belgian Congo, but a specimen, possibly a migrant of *cincta*, has been obtained at Buta.

REMARKS: Data for the specimens examined are as follows:

Luluabourg, Kasai, three females, wings, 119, 119, 120; January 15, August 13-14.

Point Noire, French Equatorial Africa, one male, wing, 122; January 26, R. Malbrant, collector.

Tibati, Cameroons, one female, wing, 120; October 13.

As noted above, migrants of the larger *R. c. cincta* of southern Africa are apt to be found throughout the range of *parvula* at the season of the South African winter.

HIRUNDO AETHIOPICA

This swallow ranges in the north African savannas from Nigeria to Somaliland. No races have been recognized. Eastern and western birds are, however, noticeably different, the break occurring somewhere in the region of the White Nile. The western population seems to be without a name and may be called

Hirundo aethiopica fulvipectus, new subspecies

TYPE: A.M.N.H. No. 560214; Farniso (near Kano), Nigeria; April 12, 1922; adult male; A. Buchanan. Wing, 110 mm.; tail to fork, 37 mm.; tail to tip of outer feathers, 74 mm.

DIAGNOSIS: Chin, throat, and breast buffy; remainder of under parts slightly washed with buff. In *H. a. aethiopica* only the chin is buffy; the remainder of the under parts are virtually pure white.

RANGE: Savannas of Nigeria and the Cameroons east to about the White Nile in the southern Anglo-Egyptian Sudan. The nominate race ranges thence eastward through Abyssinia to Somaliland and south through Kenya to the Pangani River in Tanganyika.

REMARKS: A close relative of *Hirundo aethiopica* is *H. albigularis* of Angola and southern Africa. *Albigularis* is larger than *aethiopica*, with a much bigger bill; it has a complete pectoral band, whereas that of *aethiopica* is interrupted. The two are widely separated geographically and best regarded as species. The smaller Angolan race of *albigularis* has usually been called *microptera* Hartert, but *ambigua* Bocage (1877, Ornithologie d'Angola, p. 186) is an older name for it. Sclater (1930, Systema avium Aethiopicarum, pt. 2, p. 576) believed "*microptera*" to be unrecognizable, but Chapin and I agree that it is enough smaller than *albigularis* to warrant retention. It does not by any means bridge the gap between *aethiopica* and *albigularis* and has the large bill and distinct pectoral band of *albigularis*. Incidentally, the name *Hirundo ambigua* Bocage antedates *Hirundo rustica ambigua* Stresemann, 1940, from Sikkim, which, how-

ever, Vaurie (1951, Amer. Mus. Novitates, no. 1529, p. 20) considers invalid.

MOTACILLA CLARA

Present treatment of the races of this wagtail is not at all satisfactory. Nominate *clara* of Ethiopia is large in size and pale gray on back and crown. The population of eastern Africa from Kenya south to Cape Colony is comprised of smaller birds in which the gray of back and crown is as a rule slightly darker, although, judging from two or three specimens, birds from South Africa are again as pale as those of Ethiopia. The amount of variation is not great enough to suggest changing the present practice of assigning to the race *torrentium* Ticehurst, with type locality in Zululand, all the area from Kenya to Cape Colony.

As Chapin (1953, *op. cit.*, p. 92) recently pointed out, the population that extends locally from Sierra Leone and Cameroons to the eastern Belgian Congo, which has also been called *torrentium*, differs from *clara* and *torrentium* by the dark coloration of the upper parts. Whereas examples of *torrentium* from mid-eastern Africa are at best but slightly darker than *clara*, the West African birds are very perceptibly darker. I name this new race

Motacilla clara chapini, new subspecies

TYPE: A.M.N.H. No. 415300, Nkongsamba district, at 3000 feet, Cameroons; sex? (probably male); April 4, 1930; R. H. Drinkwater. Wing, 81 mm.; tail, 92; culmen, 14.

DIAGNOSIS: Like *Motacilla clara torrentium* but back and crown noticeably darker gray (crown blackish); size somewhat smaller.

RANGE: Locally, along suitable fast-flowing brooks, well shaded by woods, from Sierra Leone, Liberia, the Gaboon, and the Cameroons to the eastern Belgian Congo.

REMARKS: Wing lengths of additional material of *chapini* are as follows: Cameroons, male, 79; females, 75, 78, 78, 79. Kango, Gaboon, male, 74 (worn). Medje, northeastern Belgian Congo, male, 77; immature female, 73. Rutshuru, Kivu, eastern Belgian Congo, female, 75, 76. Three of the Cameroons specimens were examined through the courtesy of the Cleveland Museum of Natural History. I have also examined the two nestlings secured by natives for Chapin at Medje at about 2000 feet elevation. This breeding record established the fact that ecological requirements rather than altitude, *per se*, determine the distribution of this species, even near the Equator.